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HISTORY OF THE NEW HALL COMMUNITY.

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NEW HALL IN 1780. NORTH VIEW.

HISTORY

OF THE

NEW HALL COMMUNITY

OF

Canonesses Regular of the Holy Sepulchre.

WITH A PREFACE BY

FATHER SYDNEY SMITH, S.J.

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.



PREFACE.

CONSTANTLY occurring jubilees of Colleges and Convents are reminding us just now of the Catholic Revival which set in about the middle of the century. But along with these, though fewer in number, are some centenaries to keep us from forgetting an earlier epoch of Catholic interest, when this country, in spite of its still-persisting bigotry, opened its doors to receive back its own Catholic children whom hitherto it had compelled to live in exile. One such centenary was celebrated last year by the New Hall nuns, and it seemed to them a suitable occasion for compiling an account of their community, and of its history, as likewise of the interesting old house which has been their peaceful home for the last hundred years. Such is the origin of the present volume, compiled by one of the community, to which I have been asked to write a Preface.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre dates back to a remote age. This in itself is a distinction of which its members may well be proud, but it is attended by the disadvantage that the record of its first origins is lost in the mists of the past. What tradition says on the matter may be read in the first chapter of this work, but from an historical point of view we must be content to start from the beginning of the twelfth century. William of Tyre, our best authority on the history of the Crusades, tells us, in his *Historia Belli Sacri*, that Godfrey de Bouillon, at once on his elevation to the throne of Jerusalem, that is, in 1099, “established Canons in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord, and of the Temple of the Lord, (and that) in this he conformed to the order and rule which are observed in the great and honourable churches

founded by pious princes beyond the mountains." It is disputed whether these were Regular or only Secular Canons, but it is admitted that in 1114 they adopted the Rule of St. Augustine, so that at least by that date we have certain evidence of the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre in their natural place at Jerusalem, and observing the Rule which has ever since characterized them. We begin to find, too, about this time traces of their existence in the West of Europe—in France, Spain, Italy, Poland, and in England, where there was a monastery at Warwick which claimed Henry I. as its founder.

These, however, were Canons, and for the first origin of the Canonesses we must apparently look to a much later date. At all events for the foundation from which the New Hall community has sprung we must come down to the year 1480. It was at that time that John à Broeck, who had founded and joined a Monastery of the Canons at Mount Ste. Odile, near Cologne, and another a few years later at Kinroy, near Maesych, on the Meuse, transformed this latter foundation into a convent of Canonesses; his sister Mentha, and two of her companions, Augustinian nuns from Ruremonde, being the first Canonesses to profess themselves. The New Hall nuns look back with pleasure to the fact noted in M. Habet's *Kronijk der landen von Overmaas*, that these Canonesses of Kinroy, whom they regard as their spiritual ancestors, besides being "diligent in saying and singing the Seven Canonical Hours according to the use of the Patriarchal Church of Jerusalem," "were assiduous in teaching both little children and big girls," thereby showing that teaching the young is in the full spirit of their Rule.

The convent at Kinroy must have quickly flourished, for as early as 1486 they were enabled to throw out a branch at Nieustadt, near Sittart, and still another ten years later in the county of Juliers. These two branches eventually fused, and we find them a little later established in the Convent des Bons Enfants, at Liège. Passing over more than two hundred years, during which the Canonesses had so multiplied in the Low Countries that there had come to be no less than four of their convents in the one town of Liège, we have next to notice a convent at Tongres founded from Ste. Walburge's at Liège in the earlier half of the seventeenth century.

It was to the still infant community of this convent at Tongres that in 1641 two English girls presented themselves, Susan Hawley and Frances Cary. They asked to be admitted, not to remain permanent members of that community, but that, having acquired its spirit in a noviceship made there, they might endeavour to found an English community somewhere in the neighbourhood. It is this Susan Hawley, afterwards Mother Mary of the Conception, whom the New Hall community venerates as its Foundress. It was eventually determined that the English foundation should be at Liège, there being there a College of the Society of Jesus, from the Fathers of which the nuns hoped to receive aid and spiritual direction. It was, in fact, one of the Fathers of this College, Father Joseph Simons, *alias* Father Emmanuel Lobb, who arranged for their transfer to Liège, and obtained for them the needful permission of the Prince-Bishop; and it is of interest to know that this Father Simons, *alias* Lobb, was the priest who in 1669 received the Duke of York, afterwards James II., into the Church. Father Simons was the first of a long series of Jesuit Fathers, who, till quite recently, had the spiritual charge of these English Canonesses, which explains the warm sympathy which has always subsisted between them and the Society.

The migration from Tongres took place on October 8, 1642, the party consisting of the two English girls, of whom Susan Hawley had been professed that very day, a Belgian lay-sister destined soon to return to Tongres, and Mother Margaret, of the Tongres community, who had been their Mistress of Novices. They had asked to take Mother Margaret with them that she might remain as their Superior for a few years till they had acquired experience themselves, and she had been lent very generously, though reluctantly, as the Tongres community itself consisted of only five members. Arrived at Liège they first became the guests of a widow, who lent them one or two rooms in her house, but shortly after we find them settled in quarters of their own, very comfortably and pleasantly situated on the Hill of Pierreuse, which overlooks the town. And here we meet with another of those facts pleasant to remember, which link together our English religious communities, for this

house on the *Pierreuse* had a few years previously given temporary shelter to Mary Ward and her companions. Many years later, during their wanderings on first arriving in England, the Canonesses were once more to rest under a roof where Mary Ward's name is held in honour, being hospitably entertained at the Bar Convent at York.

The English community once formed, soon began to receive from England accessions to its numbers, and by 1656 they had reached the quorum of fifteen capitular nuns which enabled them to hold their first Chapter, and had besides four young professed and four choir novices. It was at this Chapter that Mother Mary of the Conception was chosen as their first Prioress. Thus at last fully constituted, the community continued to increase steadily, became a great favourite in the town, from whose citizens it received much kindness, and began to draw into its school a stream destined never to fail of English children of the best families. It was not, however, in their pleasant house on *La Pierreuse* that they were to have their lasting home at *Liège*. When they had been there for ten years, circumstances induced the Prince-Bishop to build a fort close by them, and the soldiers proved to be undesirable neighbours for a religious community. The Prince-Bishop accordingly took their property off their hands, giving them in exchange a house down in the town, in the *Faubourg d'Avroy*, a house which had belonged to a community of *Coquins*, who were somewhat arbitrarily expelled to make room for them.

In the *Faubourg d'Avroy* they were destined to abide for more than a hundred years, and to experience the blessings of a community which has no history. Or rather, their history during this long period is the record of quiet lives, hidden with Christ in God, of which the compiler of the present volume, having in her hands the complete Registers and some biographical notices, has given some edifying gleanings, likely to be appreciated by her Religious Sisters, more perhaps than the records of external history.

They might have continued in the *Faubourg d'Avroy* till the present day, but it was fitting that an English community of *Sepulchrines* should

dwelt under an English roof, and the troubles of the French Revolution were the means which God's Providence employed to call them back to their own land. In the city of Liège there were some premonitory mutterings of the coming storm in the summer of 1789, when there was a rising of the discontented inhabitants, during which the nuns had a bitter experience of what the exactions and oppressions of a Revolutionary Committee could be. This local rising was soon subdued, and the general opinion was that the French Revolutionary armies would not come so far as Liège. Among those who shared this opinion were the "Fathers of the Academy," that is, of the Pontifical Academy, the immediate parent of Stonyhurst, which with the sanction of the Holy See, the Prince-Bishop had founded and manned with the ex-Jesuits of Liège, on the general Suppression of the Society of Jesus. These Fathers made light of the presentiments of the nuns, who were convinced that the evil days for the Low Countries were only just beginning, and were anxious to cross over to England as soon as possible. The nuns were right, as we now know, and, though through their sorrow, they had their triumph over the Fathers when the latter, compelled at last to fly at the same time with the nuns, found themselves considerably less prepared.

It is the stirring story of their troubles during the Revolution, and their consequent journey to England, which will be found of most interest to outside readers. The authoress has at this stage of her narrative the advantage of several MS. accounts, written almost in the form of diaries, day by day as the events took place. First among these is the MS. of Mother Joseph Smith, written in this manner, but revised some twenty years later by Mother Aloysia Austin Clifford, herself one of the party, who as such has been able to add some further details. Father John Laurenson, one of the Fathers of the Academy, has also left an account of the migration of the Academy to Stonyhurst under the same conditions, which comes in very appositely to supplement the convent MSS., for whereas the nuns describe vividly the scenes in which they were themselves actors, Father

Laurenson takes a more comprehensive view of the situation, and tells us of the causes out of which the disasters of the Liégiois came.

Certainly it was a wonderful migration, and a real feat of generalship on the part of Mr., that is, Father, Clifton who carried it through. The number who, on July 8, 1794, left Maestricht—the place of comparatively greater security to which they had migrated from Liége six weeks earlier, were 75 in all—"32 professed nuns, 1 novice, 2 clergesses, 12 professed lay-sisters, and 2 novices, 1 boarder, 16 pensioners, Mr. Clifton, a French *émigré* priest (Father Gervais Genin), and the gentleman who had taken care of our house at Maestricht." It would not require many hours now to pass from Maestricht to London, and not many days even amidst the confusions of a war panic, but the nuns, who had to pass down the Meuse in a coal-barge, to Rotterdam, and thence across the water in a trading vessel specially engaged, took more than forty days, days of intense fatigue, suffering, and anxiety, to which they must have been the more sensitive since many of them had not been outside the convent enclosure for years, whilst especially as they drew near to England it became of considerable importance that they should disguise their religious character as much as possible.

They landed eventually at Greenwich on August 18th, and from there drove to London. Their friends in England had engaged for them two houses, one in Old Burlington Street, the other in Dover Street, but, this divided arrangement proving most inconvenient, they moved after about ten days to a house in Bruton Street, lent them by Lord Clifford. It must have been impossible to keep up the observances of their Rule whilst they were on board the boats, but they had kept them up bravely during their sojourn at Maestricht, and they resumed the practice under considerable difficulties at once on their arrival at Bruton Street. Such fidelity needs to be specially mentioned, as showing how splendid was their religious spirit.

It was never their intention to remain in London; they only waited there till they could hear of some suitable place in the country. Accordingly, after a month's interval, they migrated to Holme Hall, on Spalding Moor, in

Yorkshire, which Lord Stourton had kindly placed at their service. But Holme Hall, though apparently commodious enough for the community, was not of sufficient size to permit of their carrying on their school. Hence the necessity of another removal, two years later, to Dean House, near Salisbury. Neither did this prove a satisfactory residence, though they remained there for the next two years, and were able to reorganize the school. The end of their troubles was, however, near at hand, and in 1798 they heard of New Hall, and at the same time found in a Mr. McEvoy, the brother of one of the nuns, a kind benefactor, who provided them with the means of purchasing it. It was on the 25th of January, 1798, that the first batch, six in number, reached the spot which was destined to be their happy and, as we trust, final resting-place.

They could not well have chosen a house with more interesting historical associations. To pass over those which attached only to the property, in 1517 it came into the possession of Henry VIII., who purchased it either from the then Bishop of London, or, according to Camden, from Sir Thomas Boleyn, the father of Anne Boleyn. Henry gave it the name of Beaulieu, and a glance at the Calendar of State Papers will show that not a few of them were "given from our Palace of Beaulieu." He is known to have added to it a great deal, and in particular to have built a noble gateway, which spread out so far as to form the entire south side of a large quadrangle, a chapel on the site of the present school quarters being on the west side, and some large hall or building of an ecclesiastical character on the east. These are represented in two plates in the second volume of the *Transactions of the Antiquarian Society*. They are by Vertue, the well-known engraver, and must date back to 1734 when he made his Essex tour. A comparison between these plates and the present building shows that the latter does not correspond with the former. The south side has disappeared altogether, having been pulled down either by Lord Waltham in the last century, or perhaps by Sir Thomas Wharton in the reign of Elizabeth. The present front resembles the north side in the drawing, except that it has seven

bays instead of six, but the east and west sides as now standing differ entirely from the plates. The explanation of these differences may perhaps be found in a letter of "Sir Thomas Wharton to Mr Yaxby,"¹ in which he writes, "the house," which he was hoping to be allowed to purchase from the Queen, "is in great ruin, being burned in Henry VIII.'s time and not repaired since. It is falling down, so that the Queen will not sell it unless she sell it in time for repair. If I had it I would make a little corner for me and my wife to dwell in, and put away the rest." Apparently, then, what we now see was built, not indeed by Sir Thomas Wharton, but by Thomas Ratcliffe, Earl of Sussex, who became the proprietor of the property in 1573, which date is inscribed on a small stone plate let into the brickwork on the west wing of the present front. The arms of Elizabeth over the present front entrance, with the flattering inscription underneath, as likewise the character of the architecture, are in keeping with the supposition that what we now see, which (apart from the additions made by the nuns) is all of the same date, was built in the reign of Elizabeth; so that Vertue must have copied drawings, not the building as it then stood.

Henry's occupancy of Beaulieu was an interesting fact, but that of his daughter, Mary Tudor, may well be deemed by its present possessors to have hallowed it. Her father assigned it to her for a residence in 1532, on her separation from her mother, and with a short interval of two years, during which, in order to outrage her, she was placed on her sister's household at Hunsdon, she made it her principal abode till the time of her accession to the throne. It was at New Hall, therefore, in the chapel on the west side, now unfortunately no longer standing, that "the Lady Mary's Mass" was regularly said, that Mass to which she persisted in admitting the people of the neighbourhood, and which in consequence gave so much trouble to her brother and his Privy Council. And it was at New Hall, and towards that same chapel that Lady Ann Wharton bowed when walking in the quadrangle with Lady Jane Grey, and drew from the latter the

¹ *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth, vol. xi. Addend. Feb. 12, 1561.*

well-known disrespectful remark about the Blessed Sacrament, which the faithful worship of so many devout nuns has done something to expiate. In Elizabeth's reign New Hall became celebrated in another way. The property had passed into the hands of Sir Thomas Wharton, the husband of the lady just mentioned, and like her a devout Catholic. There was no longer now the inviolability of a royal personage to protect the worship of the faithful, and it would have been unsafe to celebrate Mass in the open chapel. But the new owners caused it to be said in secresy, for we learn from the "examination of John Devon Clarke taken before John Darell, Esq. . . . on 17th of April of 1561," that "the said John Devon . . . upon Candlemas day saw Mr. Wharton and my Lady his wyffe with other gentlewomen, . . . and also the said John Devon being required to come up to hear mass at a back door by one Jollye a priest who said mass in latten in a chambre next to my ladye's chambre, at which mass they did have candels in their hands. And there was ministered that day holly water and holly bread."

The result of the inquiry was that Sir Thomas Wharton was sent to the Tower, the two priests, John Coxe (that is, Devon) and Jollye were sent to prison, and much of the church stuff, as we learn from an inventory in the State Papers, was confiscated. In the next reign New Hall passed into the possession of the famous royal favourite, and became the frequent scene of the doings of Baby Charles and Steenie. After the Civil War, Cromwell was allowed to purchase it for the sum of five shillings; and after the Restoration we find it in the possession of General Monk, the first Duke of Albemarle, during whose tenure and that of his son and successor, Charles II. and James II. were occasional visitors. In 1737 it was purchased by John Olmuis, Esq., afterwards created Lord Waltham, who took down much of the building, but spent large sums of money on the property. It was from the executors of this Lord Waltham that the nuns purchased it.

From the time when the community were at last settled down comfortably in the house which is still their home, their history resumes the same tranquil course as during the years spent in the Faubourg d'Avroy. Apart from the

chronicling of some minor alterations and additions to the building, nothing remains to record save a few biographical particulars about the best remembered nuns. To the outside world these might seem too trivial to record, but if the nuns judge otherwise, have they not solid reason on their side? It is not by the prospect of a life of stirring external incident that the nun is attracted whom God calls to a contemplative life, but by the prospect of a life of calm and peaceful routine, helpful to the steady endeavour to maintain in the heart a loving union with the Heart of the Divine Spouse. What wonder then that she should attach a high importance to the aid she may derive from studying the spiritual sayings and doings of those chosen souls, who have succeeded so well in attaining the end to which she aspires! One with whom the person and office of the Holy Father counted for little, might prefer to use the opportunity of an audience chiefly to study the architecture and decorations of the reception-hall, or the texture of the pontifical garments, but what wonder if the ardent Catholic is not too regardful of these externals, and is mainly intent on profiting to the full by the precious privilege of the audience itself with the Vicar of Jesus Christ!

May the inmates of New Hall continue through many generations to multiply these edifying examples of lives hidden with Christ in God, and to instil into the hearts of the children confided to their care the true spirit of Catholic faith and practice.

SYDNEY F. SMITH, S.J.

31, Farm Street, W.

Feast of All Saints, 1899.

INTRODUCTORY.

As a good deal of interest has been shown with regard to the origin of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, it has been thought well to give a brief sketch of its traditions, which many will consider fabulous, and of its history, which has been unbroken since the time of the first Christian kings of Jerusalem. For all these matters we refer the reader to the opening chapter; but here it is necessary to introduce two notices of the Order, which were published in one volume in Belgium, in 1891, by M. Williemssen, Curé of Mont-Ste.-Odile, a convent of the Holy Sepulchre, near Ruremonde in Holland.¹ The Curé begins his Introduction by apologizing for adding yet another to the crowd of notices, ancient and modern, that have been published concerning the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. This apology would be out of place in English, as probably no account of the Order exists in the language, except two very small volumes printed for private circulation by two Prioresses of this Community, one by our foundress, Reverend Mother Susan Hawley, in 1652, and the other by Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph Blount, in 1848. The notices published by M. Williemssen are from manuscripts belonging to the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre at Bilsen, which was founded in 1837, by four Canonesses, who had belonged before the French Revolution to the convents of Hasselt, Maestricht,

¹ The full name of the book is *Deux Notices sur l'Ordre Canonial du Saint Sépulchre*, publiées avec notes et documents par M. Williemssen, Curé de Mont-Ste.-Odile. Maestricht: Imprimerie à vapeur. "*Le Courrier de la Meuse*."

and Liège. These nuns collected many manuscripts which had belonged to the dispersed convents of the Order.

The first of these notices M. Williemssen conjectures to be a French translation of a work written in English by Father James Mumford, and called: *A Brief Narration concerning the first origin and flourishing state of the Religious of the Holy Sepulchre*. In our library are two manuscript copies of this work, both dated 1652, and, though the author's name is not given, it has always been attributed to Father James Mumford. The French copy bears the title of: *Brieve Narration de l'origine et de l'estat florissant des Religieux et Religieuses de l'ordre du St. Sépulchre*. It is a translation from the English with additions by a later hand, but the original, we think, we can safely attribute to Father Mumford. This Father founds his work in great measure on that of Gabriel Pennottus, who wrote the history of the Canons Regular in 1624. The impression left by reading this notice is that there is no ancient tradition of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre apart from that of the Canons Regular. The intention of Pennottus was to show that the Canons Regular were instituted by the Apostles, and as the Order of the Holy Sepulchre has the most precise tradition to this effect, he simply claims it as the first branch of the Regular Clerks, whom he asserts to have been founded by the Apostles all over the world.

The title of the second notice is: *Brevis Historia Canonici Ordinis Resurrectionis sive Custodum SS. Sepulchri Dominici in Jerusalem*. The author is a Canon of the Holy Sepulchre, for he speaks of "our" order, "our" Canons, "our" Father St. James. M. Williemssen remarks that he must have written early in the eighteenth century, about 1714, because he states that only one monastery of Canons of the Order then existed in the Low Countries with one that depended on it; and in fact, only the Priory of Holy Cross, or Hoogcruts, at Slenaken, with its dependent house at Nedercanne then remained, whereas several existed until a few years

before this date. He thinks it safe to conjecture that the author was Antony Cox, well-known in Belgium, not only for his love of study, but for a book of prayers in honour of the Passion, with an account of the miracles worked in the chapel of Nedercanne. Outside this chapel were very beautiful Stations of the Passion. These must have been the Seven Stations still in use among us, which are not the ordinary Way of the Cross. They were erected in 1697.

This author quotes the work of Father James Mumford, and asserts that it was written in favour of the English Canonesses at Liège, which is probably true. He confines the tradition more to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, though he, too, quotes Pennottus, the historian of the Regular Canons, but not so frequently as Father Mumford does, and he naturally gives many more details of the later history of the Order. Father Vanderspeeten, S.J., who has written several notices of the Order in the *Précis Historiques* (August 15th, November 15th, December, 1874, and January, 1875), and elsewhere, speaks very highly of the *Brevis Historia*, because, "the author has made use of very respectable documents." However, both Father Mumford and the author of the *Brevis Historia* make much of a manuscript which Father Vanderspeeten pronounces to be "evidently spurious." It is a letter purporting to be written by Dagobert, who was made Patriarch of Jerusalem in the time of Godfrey de Bouillon, to Guy, Archprior of the Monastery of the Holy Sepulchre at Perugia. Father Mumford writes that he had finished his history of the Order when he came upon this very ancient manuscript, which belonged to the oldest convent of the Holy Sepulchre at Liège, founded in 1480, at Kinroy, or Kinrode, by John a Broeck, and transferred to Liège in 1496. The nuns may have received the MS. from John à Broeck, who had much intercourse with the Archpriory of Perugia, as will be seen in the course of the first chapter. If the letter itself is not genuine, at least it witnesses what was the tradition of the Order at the time at which it was written. Hélyot gives several reasons for not trusting it, one of which is that no

convent of the Holy Sepulchre ever existed at Perugia, but we know from several different sources that one certainly did exist, and something will have to be said of it later. He mentions that the nuns of Belle Chasse referred him to the *Bibliothèque du Roi* for this MS., but he was unable to find it there. It was, however, as Father Mumford tells us,¹ preserved at Liège in the convent above mentioned, and copies of it were numerous. Several were brought over from Liège by our nuns.

It has been thought necessary to introduce these "Notices" to the reader, as they are quite unknown in England.

The sixty-seventh chapter of the work of Pennottus, with which the Order of the Holy Sepulchre is chiefly concerned, is given in Appendix A.

¹ See *Deux Notices*, p. 174, also the *Codex diplomaticus Bergensis*, vol. ii., for the year 1478, published by M. Willimsen. (*Précis Historiques*, January, 1876.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I. THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE	I
Traditions of the Order. John a Broeck. Various Foundations. Bull of Pope Innocent VIII. Saragossa. Warwick.	
CHAPTER II. Foundation of the Convent at Liége	15
CHAPTER III. The Coquins. The Community at the Faubourg d'Avroy.	
From 1656 to 1770	30
The Church of St. Christopher. Benefactors. Novices. The First Prioresses.	
CHAPTER IV. Reverend Mother Christina Dennett	48
CHAPTER V. Reverend Mother Austin Westby. Father Howard and the last years at Liége	68
CHAPTER VI. Troubles at Liége, and Migration to England	85
London, Holme Hall, Dean House, Purchase of New Hall. The Members of the Community who arrived at Greenwich on August 18th, 1794.	
CHAPTER VII. New Hall	129
CHAPTER VIII. Reminiscences of the old Liége Nuns	144
CHAPTER IX. From 1799 to 1844	158
CHAPTER X. Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph and Reverend Mother Mary Alphonsa	177
CHAPTER XI. Modern Times	192
Mother Mary Joseph, Mother Stanislaus, Mother Francis Regis, Sister Mary Philip, Mother Mary Angela, Sister Paul, Mother Mary Aloysia, Father James Brownbill, S.J., Father William Johnson, S.J. Departure of the Fathers. Outbreak of Diphtheria. The Centenary.	
CHAPTER XII. A few words about the School	206
APPENDIX A.	217
APPENDIX B.	220
APPENDIX C.	221

CHAPTER I.

TRADITIONS OF THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

REV. FATHER VANDERSPEETEN, S.J., begins a notice of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in the *Précis Historiques* for August 15, 1874, by remarking that "the historians and chroniclers who have written upon the Order seem to have done their best to baffle the efforts of all who wish to write after them," and that "Hélyot was the first to throw light on the chaos thus formed." Hélyot writes positively that no Canons of the Holy Sepulchre existed before 1114, when the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Arnould, obliged the secular Canons, brought from the West by Godfrey de Bouillon, and introduced by him into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to adopt the Rule of St. Augustine, thus constituting them Regular Canons. Hélyot relies entirely on a passage in the *History of the Crusades*, by William of Tyre, which passage, as Father Vanderspeeten remarks, though never called in question, has been very variously interpreted by different historians. The passage is as follows :

A few days after his elevation to the supreme dignity, Godfrey de Bouillon hastened to prove his zeal for the good of religion by immediately offering to the Lord the first-fruits of his solicitude for all that concerned the decorum of the house of God. He began by establishing (*protinus instituit*) Canons in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord, and of the Temple of the Lord; he assigned to them ample benefices, which are termed prebends, and suitable dwellings in the neighbourhood of these churches, so dear to the Heart of God. In this he conformed to the Order and Rule, *servans ordinem et institutionem*, which are observed by the great and honourable churches founded by pious princes beyond the mountains. He showed a disposition to do much more if death had given him time. This man, beloved of God, when he set out on his holy expedition had also brought in his suite monks who were chosen out of convents in which discipline flourished, men who were religious, and of very holy conversation, who during the whole voyage, at the hours of the day and of the night, had celebrated the Divine Offices for him according to the custom of the Church. When he became King, he placed them, at their own request, in the Valley of Josaphat, and for their sake he made over to this place a very large patrimony.

Father Vanderspeeten remarks that, if Godfrey had brought the Canons with him, he would have employed them to sing the Divine Office by day

and by night in preference to the monks. It seems, therefore, that Godfrey showered his bounties on Canons already existing in the Holy Land, so that the interpretation of the passage from William of Tyre may well be that Godfrey only reinstated in their former rights the ancient Canons of the Holy Sepulchre, who through the vicissitudes of ages claimed descent from St. James in person, the brother, that is the cousin of our Lord, the first Bishop and Patriarch¹ of Jerusalem. This is in fact the interpretation that some historians have given to the passage. Hélyot's, however, is quite different. He considers that the grant by Godfrey of "ample benefices called prebends" is certain proof that the Canons introduced were secular, like those who were attached to the great churches of Rheims or Lyons, but Father Vanderspeeten answers that this proof is insufficient, as certainly the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre must have been disbanded and dispersed at the time of the Crusades, so that temporary provision may have been made for them in this way. All agree that the Canons adopted the Rule of St. Augustine in 1114, and after this they began to multiply exceedingly, not only in the Holy Land, but in many parts of Europe, so that when in 1187, in the reign of Guy de Lusignan, Jerusalem again fell into the hands of the infidels, many of the Canons took refuge in their monasteries in France, Spain, Poland, Italy, and other countries.

Hélyot relies much upon another document, the history of which he gives, and a copy of which, preserved in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*, he has consulted. It gives the same account as William of Tyre of the introduction of the Canons by Godfrey de Bouillon. It is to be found under No. 90 in the *Cartulaire* of the Church of Jerusalem, edited by M. de Rozière. Father Vanderspeeten remarks of this document that not only does it fail to prove that no Canons of the Holy Sepulchre existed before the time of the Crusades, but it actually contains an incontestable proof that in the year 1140, less than half a century after the conquest of the Holy City, public opinion was in favour of the Canons, for it shows how in that year the Prior of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem proceeded to Antioch in order to assert the right of the Holy Sepulchre to certain possessions there in the times of the "ancient Greeks,"² and afterwards under the Turks. The MS. goes on: "We found among other things two mills . . . which our predecessors, the Canons of the Sepulchre of the Lord, had long freely and peaceably possessed by hereditary right. After a diligent examination made by common

¹ The Bishops of Jerusalem did not receive the title of Patriarch until the reign of Justinian.

² That is, before the Ottoman invasion in 637.

agreement with Raymond, Prince of this city, . . . we have set to work to restore these mills."

"Is it credible," asks Father Vanderspeeten, "that in presence of Prince Raymond, the Prior of the Holy Sepulchre should have dared, after forty years only, to maintain the rights of Canons who never existed, and whose successor he pretended to be, and that the Prince himself should have acknowledged these rights after a 'diligent examination'?" It must not be supposed, however, that Father Vanderspeeten maintains the tradition of the Order in its full extent, for he expressly disclaims his intention of doing this, but that it existed long before the Crusades he considers quite undeniable. He writes: "It is not enough to prove even by sure texts that there have at all times been priests or faithful laymen who have watched over the Tomb of the Redeemer. No one thinks of disputing this. It is evident that so long as there has been a Christian heart at Jerusalem there must have been a guardian, at least officious, of the Holy Sepulchre."

If no one thinks of contesting it, why not agree that it was so, that the Order which claims to have had this privilege really possessed it, especially as the document above quoted as certainly genuine carries the tradition to a date earlier than 637, though it does not say how much earlier. If, as Father Vanderspeeten goes on, "this guardianship does not constitute the Canon Regular bound by vows, pledged to observe religious discipline, &c.," . . . neither does it prove that there were no Canons Regular or priests who led a life which was similar to theirs, but rather favours the view that some such religious men must have existed. It seem even more likely that virgins and holy widows must have been found to imitate the lives of those who ministered to our Lord. In the *Peregrinatio Sanctæ Silvæ*, a company of virgins is distinctly mentioned about three centuries before the Mahometan invasion.

And such in fact is the tradition of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. This we propose to state more clearly with the help of the documents mentioned in the Introduction. The tradition then is that when the Apostles were dispersed to preach the Faith all over the world, St. James the Less, the "Brother of the Lord," remained in Jerusalem, of which city he was Bishop, that he lived there with his clergy, who made the vow of poverty and had all things in common, vowed obedience to St. James, and afterwards to St. Simeon and their successors the Bishops of Jerusalem, that St. James gave them certain regulations which were consigned to writing by St. Simeon,¹

¹ Our only authority for this statement is the alleged letter of Dagobert

and that this holy brother of St. James drew up further rules for their conduct which he founded on the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. One of the chief duties of their life was to watch over and honour the Holy Places in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood, and very many holy virgins imitated their manner of life so far as their sex would permit. Among the first of these holy virgins were many who had followed our Lord in His Public Life and ministered to Him, had been faithful to Him in His Passion and Death, had come early on Easter morning to the Holy Sepulchre, and had continued in prayer in the upper chamber with Mary the Mother of Jesus. It has never been claimed that these holy men and women called themselves Canons and Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre, but only that their manner of life continued to flourish at Jerusalem, and that the Canons of a later date professed to be descended from them. All our authorities tell us that the white linen surplice is worn by the Religious of the Holy Sepulchre in imitation of the white linen garment which St. Jerome and other authors affirm to have been worn by St. James.

The clergy and virgins, with the whole body of the Christians, escaped from Jerusalem before its destruction by Titus A.D. 70, but many of them returned soon after, and lived in caves or wherever they could find shelter near the Holy Places until the second destruction of the city under Hadrian, in A.D. 117. Even after this they continued to keep watch over the place of the Holy Sepulchre, and the other spots sanctified by the presence of our Lord in the flesh, and in spite of the efforts made by the Jews and pagans to obliterate all traces of them, their memory was so well preserved that when St. Helen visited Jerusalem they were easily pointed out to her. Constantine the Great placed these priests of Jerusalem, who were also Religious, in the glorious Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Bishop of Jerusalem was also their Abbot.

The Bishop who succeeded Macarius was Cyriacus, or Quiriacus, who, under Julian the Apostate, suffered a glorious martyrdom with all his Canons.

From the time of Constantine the Great, the Canons of the Church of Jerusalem were called Canons of the Resurrection and Custodians of the Holy Sepulchre. They remained undisturbed until the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians under Chosroes, A.D. 615, when a general massacre of them took place. But some must have escaped, for when the Holy Cross was recovered by the Emperor Heraclius, it returned to the custody of its former guardians, the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre.

In 637, Jerusalem and the Holy Land fell under the yoke of the Saracens,

and the Patriarch Orestes was taken into captivity to Babylon,¹ and there put to a cruel death. From this time to that of the Crusades, a period of four centuries and a half, the Canons succeeded in retaining possession of their monasteries near the Holy Places by paying tribute to the Mahometans. It was at some time between the reign of Constantine and the Mahometan conquest, that they obtained the names of Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre.

The letter of Dagobert gives the following symbolical explanation of the dress of the Religious of the Holy Sepulchre. It is transcribed from the MS. dated 1652, which we call Father Mumford's. The Father translates the letter of Dagobert :

Their white surplice resembleth the Angels who appeared in white at ye Holy Sepulcher when they declared Christ's resurrection, as also that St. James did use the like Habit with his disciples, wearing a redd Crosse, which Crosse we ware just over our hart, to remember Christ's Passion with all harty Affection, according to that of the Canticles, Put me as a Seale upon thy hart. This Crosse is redd to signifye the bloud of our Lord ; it is of silk to signifye his Sacred flesh taken from the most pure virgin flesh of our Lady.

In some Authentick writings we read that our Lady carryed upon her Breast a Cross painted by St. Luke ; our Crosse is double, because we are Religious of that place in which our Saviour suffered a double Crosse, one exterior in his body, another interior and more painful by the grieve of his mynde.

Over our white rochet we weare a long black cloake which is tyed to our neck with two redd strings, the one of them signifyeth the rope which tyed our Saviour to ye pillar when he was whipped, the other signifyeth the rope with which they stretched his armes upon the Crosse. In this Crosse is all our glory, and in the sweet meditation of his Passion.

Father Mumford thus concludes his transcripts from the letter of Dagobert. "This manuscript hath also dyvers things of the Stations so much used by this Order, because all the Holy Places were their habitations, and therefore now they endeavour still to dwell in spirit in those most Holy Places out of their great affection to our Blessed Saviour."

With this paragraph we dismiss the letter of Dagobert. Enough has perhaps been said concerning the reinstatement of the Canons under the first Christian kings of Jerusalem. After this, there followed a period of great glory and rapid increase, some details of which will be given in this chapter ; but this seems a suitable place to say a few words concerning the last years of the Canons in the Holy Land. When Jerusalem was taken by the Saracens

¹ From the letter of Dagobert.

under Saladin in 1187, great numbers of the Canons took refuge in the houses of their Order in Europe,¹ but Heraclius the Patriarch, with many of his subjects, took up his abode in Acre with the consent of Richard I., King of England.² Here they remained for one hundred and five years longer, until the city was taken and burned by the infidels in 1291, when all the Canons are said to have perished, except three who carried the news of the disaster to Pope Nicholas IV.

Father James Mumford gives two reasons why it now became impossible for the Canons to resume the guardianship of the Holy Sepulchre even by paying a heavy tribute to the infidels, as they had done for several centuries before the first Crusade. The first was the mortal hatred which the infidels had conceived against the Cross, which these Canons wore so conspicuously on their breasts, and the second was that the Sultan had made an alliance with the Greek Emperor, and had made over all the Christian churches in the Holy Land to him, so that the Greek schismatic rite was established in them, for thus the Sultan hoped to obtain the assistance of the Greeks against the Crusaders of the West. It is evident that, under these circumstances, the former owners would be the last to be put in possession of these Holy Places. At last, in 1336, at the earnest solicitation of many Christian princes, eight Franciscans were allowed to dwell at the Holy Sepulchre, "but not alone," Father Mumford continues, "for the schismatics also officiate there after their own fashion, and those who have read accounts of travellers in the Holy Land know how much these good Religious suffer from these barbarians, and how much it costs Christendom to maintain them there." After this the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre cheerfully undertook the more humble task of begging alms for the payment of the heavy tribute exacted by the infidels for every privilege granted to the Christians in the Holy Land, and also for the purpose of raising funds for a fresh Crusade, an enterprise dear to the hearts of all the Popes for three centuries after the fall of Acre. Popes Urban IV., Alexander IV., Gregory XI., Alexander V., and Eugenius IV., granted many privileges and Indulgences to the Order to promote this object.

It is now time to turn to the monasteries in the Low Countries, which were the more immediate predecessors of our convent. The first and best known house of the Order in those countries, was the monastery of

¹ The names of some of these convents will be found in the sixty-seventh chapter of the work of Pennottus, printed in the Appendix.

² The *Brevis Historia* tells us that even after this the Canons continued, by means of bribes to the infidels, to live with splendour at Jerusalem. Probably it was with interruptions.

Denkendorp, in Groningen. It was founded in 1139, in the second year of the Emperor Conrad III., by a man of noble birth named Count Berthold, who made over all his possessions to William, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Peter the Prior, for the benefit of the said monastery, and confirmed his donation in 1142 in the presence of many witnesses. These possessions included, besides Denkendorp, many places in Belgium, namely at Aquisgrani, at Wimertingen in the country of Liége, between Tongres and Hasselt, at Bierbeck near Louvain, and in other places. In 1144, the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre at Denkendorp entered Belgium, and built monasteries on some of these estates.¹

In about 1240, a noble lord named Repen, who had been created a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, observing the "splendour" of the Canons there, made a vow that, if he got safe to his own country, he would give to the Canons of Wimertingen the place called Henegowe for a convent. Having obtained letters from the Patriarch and the Prior, he returned safe and joyous, and fulfilled his vow.² It is from this Priory of Henegowe that all the convents of nuns of the Holy Sepulchre in Belgium, Holland, France, one in Baden, and ours in England, take their rise, through the convent founded at Mont Ste. Odile by John a Broeck, the great reformer of the Order in the fifteenth century.

This John a Broeck, or Abrouck, was born at Beck, near Brée, in Campine. One day, in the year 1465, while still a student, probably at the University of Cologne, he passed by an abandoned sanctuary called Mont St. Pierre, now known as Ste. Odile. He was attracted by the picturesque appearance of its church with two towers, but when he approached it he found it to be in ruins. The doors and windows were all destroyed, and horses, cows, and pigs had made their way into it. He found from inquiries which he made in the neighbourhood, that this desolate sanctuary contained the shrines of three Saints who had evangelized the country in the eighth century. They were St. Wiro and St. Plechelm, Irish Bishops, and St. Otger, an English deacon. John a Broeck was inspired by God with great affection for this holy place. He fell upon his knees, and made a vow to restore it to holy uses. Having heard that it had once been given to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre,³ he made up his mind to offer himself as a novice in that Order. Together with another young man named John, he went to

¹ From the *Brevis Historia*, p. 90. ² *Ib.*

³ This refers to a diploma which was granted in 1442 by the Emperor Frederic III. to the Canons of Denkendorp, granting them permission to found a convent of Canonesses at Mont Ste. Odile, but they did not act upon it.

the monastery of Henegowe, near Hasselt, where he found, instead of the flourishing community that had once been there, only a solitary Religious named Cornelius Œslinger, who admitted him and his companion into the Order, and they were professed in or about 1467, John as a choir novice and a future Canon, and his companion as a lay-brother, and then they returned to Mont Ste. Odile and began the restoration of the church. John was soon ordained priest, and made Prior of the new monastery, where many novices joined him. Together they celebrated the Divine Office with such fervour, that they were beloved by all. After seven years, however, a Visitor was sent by the General into Belgium, and he was so much shocked by the simplicity and poverty of John and his companions, that he turned them out of the Order.¹ John and his companions betook themselves to prayer and fasting, and John went to Perugia, threw himself prostrate at the feet of the Archprior, and begged for mercy. He then informed the prelate of all that had happened. A Chapter was called, and John and his companions were solemnly received back as Canons of the Church of Jerusalem and members of the Order of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. When John was on the point of departing, the Archprior put a ring on his finger as a sign that he was a prelate of the Order. He was received with great joy when he returned to his own country, and what is called his "reform" was begun in earnest.

In 1474 he founded another house at Kinroy, or Kinrode, near Mæsych.

The *Kronijk der landen von Overmaas*, published by M. l'Abbé J. Habets, gives a very pleasing description of John a Broeck. "He was of lofty stature, and God had endowed him with singular grace in his conversation; it was mild, affable, and modest. He was a majestic person, and reprov'd ill-doers rather by the severity of his look than by the sharpness of his words, and he loved the good." The fame of his virtues was spread abroad, and the Archprior of Perugia, Cathanius, made him his vicar in Lower Germany, on January 2nd, 1484, and in the following November Fabricius de Oddis, the successor of Cathanius, confirmed him in his office, granting him all necessary powers, and declaring that his jurisdiction extended over the provinces of Treves, Cologne, and Bremen, and over the dioceses of Cambrai and Tournay. On March 2nd, 1480, Pope Innocent VIII. approved all these arrangements of the Archprior, at the desire of all the convents of the Holy Sepulchre in the dioceses of Cologne, Liége, Munster, Utrecht, Tournai, and Cambrai. John became the reformer of the Order in all these countries. Meanwhile the

¹ This almost incredible circumstance is stated without a comment in the *Brevis Historia*.

convent at Kinroy did not prosper, for want of means to support the Canons. "John a Broeck," the chronicle continues, "became sad about this house of Kinroy. He was no longer gay and good-humoured, but sad and pensive. At last he took counsel of his dearest friends, who were zealous for the glory of God and the honour of the Order, and it was thought well to create new Canonesses of the Order, and to place them at Kinroy, as women could live there better than men, being more laborious and less expensive, which was determined upon." John a Broeck called upon his sister, whose name was Clémence or Mentha, who was an Augustinian nun at Ruremonde, and, after ascertaining from her that she felt sufficient courage to help him in his undertaking, he asked the Superior to allow him to take two other nuns as well as his sister, and the chronicle says that "as the Maries went to the Sepulchre, so these three Sisters went to Mont Ste. Odile, where three postulants soon joined them. Here they made their novitiate, and on Sunday, October 8th, 1480, the three first were professed and created Canonesses of this noble Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and on the following day they took possession of the convent of Kinroy, where they were very diligent in saying and singing the seven Canonical Hours according to the use of the Patriarchal Church of Jerusalem, and they lived in the exact observance of the Constitutions brought from Perugia; they were assiduous in teaching both little children and big girls, so that they were loved by all, and Messire John a Broeck was entirely consoled, and he recovered his gay looks and his good-humour."¹ This convent of Kinroy became the mother-house of about thirty convents of the Holy Sepulchre, which existed until the French Revolution, chiefly in the Low Countries, but one was in Baden-Baden, where it still flourishes, having escaped all disturbance during the revolutionary wars, and four were in France. From Kinroy a foundation was sent to Nieustat, near Sittart, in 1486. Ten years later another foundation was sent to Gartzen St. Antoine, in the country of Juliers. The nuns at Nieustat were so much disturbed by wars, that in 1496 they retired to Liège, and purchased from a community of lay brethren the ancient house of St. Elizabeth, commonly called the Convent of the Bons Enfants. This name was applied by the people of Liège to these good Brothers on account of their exemplary lives, and the great care they bestowed upon the sick. The name passed from them to their first house, and to the nuns who occupied it after them, and not only to them, but to other Sepulchrine nuns who from this house made foundations in many towns of Flanders, and it clung to them the more easily that in all

¹ From the *Kronijk der landen von Overmaas*.

their convents they attended to the education of children. This is so true, that some have called them the first teaching Order in the Church. Seven years later, in 1503, thirteen nuns from Juliers, a foundation like their own, from Nieustat, joined them, and in 1507 the remaining nuns of Juliers succeeded the Canons in the old monastery of Henegowe. It is now time to remind ourselves and our readers that this is not a history of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and therefore not the place to give the history of the foundations from the Bons Enfants; but a few words must be said of the foundress of the three convents of Hasselt, Maestricht, and St. Agatha's at Liège, now represented by the convents of Bilsen, Alken, Kinroy, and Mont Ste. Odile. These convents were founded from Visé, between 1627 and 1638, by Helen d'Enckenvoert, who laboured with great zeal, not only for the extension of the Order and its perfection, but also by collecting documents concerning it which had belonged to former houses of Canons, and from public archives. Some of these have been preserved by the nuns of Bilsen, and among them are the *Brevis Historia*, and a collection of *Transumpta* from Bulls of Popes and other important documents. Helen d'Enckenvoert herself was first cousin to St. John Berchmans, her mother, Ann Van den Hove, being sister to Elizabeth Van den Hove, the mother of the Saint. Helen's brother, Count Adrian d'Enckenvoert, helped her very generously with her foundations. Among her Religious at St. Agatha's, at Liège, were Sister Mary Elizabeth Berchmans and Sister Helen Van den Hove, both relatives of herself and of the young Saint. It is interesting to us to know that Helen's chief assistant in her foundations, and her successor as Prioress, was Marie de Liverlo, from Liège, who was probably a relative of our Mother Austin Liverlo or Liverloz, who was also a native of Liège. The nuns at Bilsen, the modern representatives of Helen's foundations, deserve great praise for the zeal they have shown in establishing houses in places so dear to the Order as Kinroy and Mont Ste. Odile.

In one important matter we owe still more to another foundress of some of these convents, and this is the Countess de Chaligny, who was the first to introduce the nuns of the Order into France. Her maiden name was Claude de Mouy. Hélyot tells us that at eleven years of age she was married to George de Joyeuse, a son of the Vicomte de Joyeuse, Marshal of France. At the end of fifteen months she was left a widow, and in 1585, married Henry of Lorraine, Count of Chaligny. When only twenty-seven years of age she again became a widow, this time with four children. As soon as they were provided for, she begged for some

Sepulchrine nuns from Visé to come and assist her in carrying out her design of founding a convent of the Order at Charleville. Three were sent, the name of the Prioress being Sister Catherine Diffuys. The Countess of Chaligny built the convent, but she only lived about two years in it after her profession, for she died on October 26th, 1627, aged fifty-five. Of her four children, the eldest, Prince Charles of Lorraine, was Bishop of Verdun, and afterwards became a Jesuit, and her only daughter, Princess Louise of Lorraine, after the death of her husband, the Prince de Ligne, became a Capuchin nun, and died at Mons in 1667.

Two Sepulchrine convents were founded in France from the one at Charleville, one at Bellechasse, Paris, and another at Luynes. A fourth was founded at Vierzon, in Berry, from Belgium. The Constitutions compiled and enlarged from older ones by a Jesuit Father for these foundations are those which we follow.

Of the four French convents one only exists now. They were all dispersed at the French Revolution, but four nuns from Charleville returned to their old convent in 1818, and the community begun by them still flourishes.

It is time now to return to John a Broeck. Father Vanderspeeten tells us that in the midst of his prosperity a thunderbolt fell upon him in the suppression of his Order in 1489, by Pope Innocent VIII., and the transfer of all its property to the Knights of Malta. The suppression took effect in Italy, France, and Spain; but Maximilian of Austria, who, by his marriage with Mary of Burgundy, had now become Sovereign of the Low Countries, obtained from Alexander VI., the successor of Innocent VIII., another Bull re-establishing the Order in Belgium, Germany, and Poland. Rev. M. Willimssen remarks "that this account of the affair is not without its difficulties, for in the two passages in the Bull in which the suppression and incorporation are mentioned, the word that governs the genitive *sancti Sepulchri Dominici* seems to be missing, and the word *Canonici* does not occur once. Besides, the object of the incorporation was not only to increase the possessions of the Order of St. John, but also the number of its knights, and how could this end have been attained by the incorporation of Canons? and is it credible that the Pope could have intended to impose military duties on them? Besides, how is this total suppression of the Order to be reconciled with the Bull which the same Pope Innocent VIII. had granted scarcely two years earlier to the Prior of Mont Ste. Odile, authorizing him as Vicar Provincial to admit Canons and Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre. And in the supposition that

the suppression was total, what was to become of the Canonesses? No arrangement is made for them. The Order has continued to exist in the Low Countries, Germany, Poland, and France,¹ and to enjoy the protection of the Holy See and of the Bishops. . . . These reasons seem to give new colour to the opinion that the Order of the Holy Sepulchre consisted not only of Canons and Canonesses, but also of Knights, and that these last alone were suppressed and incorporated by the Bull of Innocent VIII.”²

However this may have been, the suppression did apparently extend to the archpriory of Perugia, and of this we hear no more after 1489. None of the houses in the Low Countries,³ Germany, Poland, or Spain, were affected by it except in so far as they lost the benefit of unity of government, for from the fall of Acre to this date, the Archprior of Perugia had been Superior General of the whole Order.

No record has reached us of John a Broeck's anxieties during this time. He died in 1510, in the Convent of the Holy Cross near Slenaken, which he had founded. The *Brevis Historia* thus records his death: “*Anno 1510, Joannes a Broeck, æterna memoria dignus, ad Superos est evocatus.*”

The account of the suppression given by one of the continuators of what we suppose to be Father Mumford's work, is as follows: “. . . it happened that the Knights of Malta having performed some fine exploits in the Adriatic Sea against the Turks, they had got so well into the good graces of Pope Innocent VIII., that they presented to him a request in which they pointed out to him that if he would unite to their Order the Knights and Canons of the Holy Sepulchre, with the Lazarites and several others, they would become so powerful, that they would not only be able to defend Italy and other countries of Christendom against the Turks, but also to reconquer the Holy Land. Innocent VIII., therefore, being pleased with this request, granted a Bull by which he united the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and the others mentioned before, to the Order of Malta, which Bull took effect in Italy, France, and Spain, so that the Religious of the Holy Sepulchre were obliged to take the habit of the Order of Malta in the said countries,

¹ In France we have always supposed that it ceased to exist until the foundation of the convent at Charleville in 1622.

² From a note by Rev. M. Willimsen to the text of the Bull of Innocent VIII., which he has published among other documents after the two notices mentioned above.

³ In the *Brevis Historia*, a monastery of Canons of the Holy Sepulchre is alleged to have been founded in Cambrai in 1064, thirty-five years before the first Crusade, and to have flourished until the time of Innocent VIII., when the Canons changed their habit and Order to become Benedictines, in order to escape the decree and save their property, but the prelate continued to wear the double cross. We have not been able to verify this.

and we find that the said Maltese turned their cloisters into commanderies. This is how these Knights have become so rich, for in 1312 a great part of the property of the Templars was granted to them, and one hundred and seventy-four years afterwards the property and revenues of the Holy Sepulchre. It is true that Innocent VIII. did this for the greater good of the Church, but the error of the request of the Maltese appeared afterwards, inasmuch as they did not accomplish what they had boasted of beforehand, which has not prevented them from remaining masters and lords of all the above-mentioned goods." This passage reads as if it had been written by a Canon or Canoness of the Holy Sepulchre. It is not in our English version of the *Brief Narration*, dated 1652, but is one of the additions to the same work recently published in French by Rev. M. Willimssen, as mentioned before.

John a Broeck had four successors in the office of Provincial of all the houses of the Order in the Low Countries, the last of whom was John Mombeck, who died in 1606. Soon the need of a general government became so much felt, that in 1675 the Priors of Xhavée and Slenaken, and the Prioresses of Verviers and Bouvigne, begged to be united to the convent of Miechow in the diocese of Cracow, and their petition was granted by the Archbishop of Lemberg in his quality of Provost General of the Canons of the Order at Miechow. The Canons of the Holy Sepulchre are said to have been numerous in Poland in the first decades of this century, but we do not know that any exist now.

There are two monasteries of the Order that ought not to be passed over in silence. One of these was still existing at Saragossa in 1892, and is probably there still. Father Mumford writes with hesitation of its existence, and the *Brevis Historia* does not express any certainty about it, but refers to Pennottus. Here it was also considered legendary until about the year 1864, when, through the introduction of a former Spanish pupil at New Hall, several letters passed between the two convents, and the Prioress of Saragossa sent us a doll dressed in the habit worn there, which is sufficiently like ours to show that it came from the same origin; but the veil is lace, the sleeves are so long as to touch the ground, and a double cross of gold is worn round the neck, as well as the silk one on the cloak. The nuns complained that they had lost many of their papers during the two sieges of Saragossa during the Peninsular War. In 1892, another former pupil of New Hall obtained the following account of the foundation, which she forwarded to us.

“Zaragoza, Nov. 26th, 1892.

“This royal monastery was founded by the Marquesa Gil de Parra, daughter of the King of Navarre, in 1276, professing the Canonical Rule of St. Augustine, and under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and of the Prior of the Holy Sepulchre of the house of Catalayud.”

This house of Catalayud is mentioned in our accounts of the Order with less hesitation than Saragossa, but we have no proof that it still survives.

The other house that claims mention is the Priory of the Holy Sepulchre that formerly existed at Warwick, a short account of which is given by Dugdale. Its foundation was begun by Henry de Newburgh, the first Earl of Warwick, after the Conquest, in the reign of Henry I. At this time there was a great concourse of pilgrims to the Holy Land, and these solicited the Earl to erect a monastery in imitation of the Canons Regular established in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. The priory was situated on a most pleasant declivity on the north side of Warwick. Large possessions in land were bestowed upon the Canons, and many liberties and privileges were granted to them by Henry II., Richard I., Henry III., and Edward I., “so great an esteem had they for that Order, *pro reverentia Sancti Dominici Sepulchri*.” In the survey taken in the twenty-sixth year of Henry VIII., their possessions were purposely much undervalued in order to include them in the catalogue of smaller houses which were to be dissolved by the statute of the twenty-seventh year of the same reign. Robert Radford, the last Prior, received a life pension of £5 per annum. Hélyot says that the priory of Warwick was the chief among several of the same Order in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The *Brevis Historia* gives the number as seven in England.

CHAPTER II.

FOUNDATION OF THE CONVENT AT LIÉGE.

IT is not a very gracious proceeding to begin the history of a religious community by finding fault with the foundresses, but we are inclined to quarrel with our first Mothers for leaving us such meagre records of their work. They seem, in their humility, to have forgotten that those who came after them would have much valued some little account of their actions, and might have had much to learn from their virtues if some little account of each one as she died had been written by one of the survivors. As it is, such little notices have been preserved only of the Prioresses. However, the registers are almost perfect from the first, and with these and a short chronicle of the first ten years of the community, with a few documents from the Liége archives, we hope to make a little sketch of this community of Canonesses Regular of the Holy Sepulchre, now for a hundred years settled at New Hall, in Essex; but founded at Liége, in 1642, by Mother Mary of the Conception Hawley. We regret very much that no account has been kept of the early life of our foundress. The old convent register tells us that her father's name was "Hierome Hawley, Esq.," and that her mother was Judith Hawkins. Mr. Gillow, in his dictionary, gives her father the name of Thomas, and tells us that he was nearly related to Sir Thomas Hawley, of Buckland House, in Somerset, who was created a Baronet in 1645, and advanced to the Peerage of Ireland, as Lord Hawley, Baron of Donamore, in 1646.

Susan Hawley was born in Brentford, in Middlesex, in 1622. Whether she crossed the sea for the purpose of founding a convent, or whether her vocation came to her when, like so many of her nation, she was residing, with her family, in the Low Countries for the safer and better practice of her religion, we do not know, but it is certain that she was well acquainted with the Jesuit Fathers at Liége, and probably she, like many of her first companions, had relatives among them. Our meagre chronicle only tells us that, "by God's holy inspiration," she entered the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre at Tongres.

Her first companion, Frances Cary, was a daughter of John Cary, Esq., and Judith Stavely. She was born at Borly, in Suffolk, though she is said to have been related to the Tor Abbey family. We know no more of her early life than of that of our foundress.

The convent of Tongres had been very recently founded from St. Walburga's at Liége, which was one of the three convents of the Holy Sepulchre already existing in that city. Susan Hawley chose the little convent at Tongres, though it numbered only five professed nuns, because it alone, of the many houses of the Order then existing in Belgium, had adopted the Constitutions which had been recently revised by a Jesuit Father from the ancient Statutes of the Order, and confirmed by Pope Urban VIII. in a Brief, dated December 18th, 1631. It is strange that any doubt should have existed as to the authorship of these beautiful and ample Constitutions, but though they have been attributed to Father Louis Lallemant, S.J., it seems almost certain that they were really compiled by Father Montréal, S.J. The revision was undertaken at the request of the Countess de Chaligny for the house she had founded at Charleville in 1622, as mentioned in the last chapter.

The story of the foundation must be given in the words of an old record which, even in the memory of those now living, used to be read aloud in the refectory each year on St. Bridget's day. The title it bears is, "A Relation of the beginning of the English Monastery of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord in Jerusalem, begun in the year of our Lord 1642, the 8th of October, in the following manner." It is a very unsatisfactory document, as it leaves out much that we should like to know. There are several copies of it in the library, all exact transcripts, so that not a word is changed, but with variations in the spelling. The handwriting of the oldest copy here used is more modern than that of our old registers, so that it is not likely to be the original. It was probably written in the lifetime of Mother Susan Hawley, as some light would surely have been thrown on her character and virtues if it had been written after her death. The whole of it will be found in the following paragraphs, though the narrative must be interrupted from time to time as occasion serves.

After some two or three years that the monastery of Tungers of this said Order which came from the Monastery of St. Walbuge in the suburbs of Liege¹ had

¹ In our old registers the name is sometimes spelt Leedge. Our old nuns always pronounced it as if so spelt.

been settled in the town of Tengers, they being then but five professed in quire, by God's holy inspiration there entered amongst them an English gentlewoman, by name Mrs. Susanne Hawley, who came to that monastery the 13th of July in the year 1641, and took the scholar's habit the 15th of August following, and was clothed the 7th of October of the same year. She entered there with the intention to begin an English monastery out of that monastery. Upon St. Thomas' eve, the 21st of December, came hither Mrs. Frances Cary, who took the scholar's habit on the 6th of January, in the year 1642, with the same intention to be one of those who should begin an English monastery. She was clothed towards the end of the month of July in the same year; during this space of time much counsel was taken when and where this English monastery should be seated; and at length it was resolved it should be at Liege, by reason that there was an English College of the Society, from whom they might have all spiritual help and comfort, towards the advancing of which it was thought expedient that Mother Margaret of the Holy Sepulchre, who was then Mistress of Novices and upon some occasion then at Liege, should negotiate and procure by the assistance and counsel of Rev. Father Joseph Simons of the Society, the permission of Prince Ferdinand, Bishop of Liege, to begin and settle an English monastery in the said town. This design was only known to the Reverend Mother Prioress of Tenger's monastery, to Mother Margaret, and the two English gentlewomen, until it was effected, which happened in the following manner.

We should have been glad of more information about the convent of Tongres. It is easy to conjecture that it was business connected with the still recent foundation that took Mother Margaret to Liége so opportunely. The record leaves us no doubt as to the secrecy with which the enterprise was carried out. The Prioress and Mother Margaret knew of it, the other three members of the community did not, and the wonder is not that these three opposed the project, but that they allowed themselves to be convinced at last. The record goes on :

Upon the 6th of October, 1642, the Reverend Mother Prioress of Tengers proposed to her community to send out one of her Religious to assist in the beginning of an English monastery with the two English gentlewomen who were then novices in that monastery. Much difficulty and opposition there was amongst them to consent, by reason their own monastery was but a beginning itself, and they not well able to spare any of theirs, being but five in number that were profest; but at length, considering how much it would prove to the glory of God, they consented to it. Then it was agreed that the said Mistress of Novices should go out with the English as soon as the first of 'em was professed, which profession was performed on the 8th day of October, at 8 o'clock in the morning. It was done very privately, because it was not convenient it should be known in the town, fearing some opposition might happen. About 12 o'clock the same day, all things

being disposed for that end, they parted from that monastery and came to Liege four in number, to wit, Mother Margaret in quality of Superior, and ordained so by the Reverend Mother and consent of the Religious of Tungers, accompanied with Mother Mary of the Conception, *alias* Mrs. Susanne Hawley, professed that day, and Sister Frances of St. Ignatius, *alias* Frances Cary, novice, and a lay-sister of Tungers, also novice, who remained only some months with the new beginners, and was afterwards professed at St. Walburge. This little company arrived that night at Liege, and were received by a good widow woman of that town, who very charitably lent them three rooms of her house, until such time as they could be better provided, which was about six weeks. During this time there came out of England to them a sister to the above-mentioned Mrs. Cary, by name Jane Cary, upon the 9th of November, and took the scholar's habit upon the Presentation of our Blessed Lady the same month and year, and took the name of Helen of the Holy Cross. Altho' they were but four, yet they kept quire and other observances, as much as their number would permit, from their first beginning, and having no other conveniences to call them to Office and such like exercises, but only a little silver bell which was given them by the woman of the house, taken from the rattle of one of her children, making use thereof so long as they remained there, which is yet in being and kept as a memory of their first beginning.

Unfortunately we cannot echo these words, for we do not know whether the little bell is "in being," or not. We would gladly identify it with a little silver-plated bell which our present Reverend Mother found in her room in a small drawer, in the company of treasured manuscripts, just the place in which we might expect such a thing to be kept. It is not such a bell as would come off a rattle of the present day. It is mounted with a silver handle, but the good widow may have kindly had the handle put on. However, it is not labelled, and refuses to tell its own tale, so it might as well remain "out of being." Not so the good widow, whose name we would give much to know. We can only conjecture that she may have been the mother of one of our first Liége nuns. We resume the Relation :

Their number now increasing, they hired part of a house opposite to St. Hubert's Church, called by the name of Barbeau, where they remained for two years, during which time diverse came and were professed amongst them to the number of four—to wit, Mrs. Jane Green, Mrs. Elizabeth Collins, Mrs. Ann Mary Vanbule, and Mrs. Ann Barbara Plenevaux. At the end of two years, they bought a faire large house and garden, seated upon the hill of Peeruse, where formerly had lived some English gentlewomen, commonly known by the name of Mrs. Ward's company.

The Relation would lead us to suppose that these four novices were professed at Barbeau, but though they entered there they were certainly professed at Pierreuse, as the following quaint entry, copied from the profession register, proves: "Mrs. Jane Greene, Irish of nation, daughter to Mr. George Greene and Mrs. Jane Tempest, was born at Corre Stowen, in the county of Kilkennie, tooke the habitt of religion on y^e 14 of Feb. 1643. Cloathed on y^e 10 of January, '44, tooke to name Sister Paula of the Passion; and was professed on the 15th of January, in the year 1645, being then twenty-two years of ayge."

This entry is given as a specimen of all the others, except that of Mrs. Elizabeth Collins, or Collinges, as she is named in the register. She was the first to win the crown, as she died before the community was fully established under its own Superiors, on January 5th, 1649. It is probably for this reason that neither the name of her mother nor the place of her birth is given. She is merely stated to have been "English of nation," to have received the habit on February 2nd, 1644, to have been clothed on March 19th, the same year, and professed on June 24th, 1645, aged twenty. Her religious name was Dorothy Josephine of Jesus. In the obituary she is named Mother Josephine Collins.

Mother Paula of the Passion filled some important offices in the community. She outlived Rev. Mother Susan Hawley, and died after about sixty-six years of religious life, at the age of eighty-six, on February 20th, 1709. Although born at Kilkenny, her parents were English, and had retired to Ireland to avoid the persecution in their native land. She was sister to Fathers Martin and Christopher Green, S.J., the former of whom collected materials to assist Father Bartoli in his *History of the English Province*, while Father Christopher is said to have done more than any other man for the English martyrs, by collecting records of their sufferings.

From the very first the English nuns met with very great attention and kindness from all ranks of the population of Liége and the neighbourhood. Ann Mary Vanbuel, mentioned in the Relation as the third postulant who joined the community at Barbeau, was born in Liége, and was a daughter of Mr. Andrew Vanbuel and Mrs. Ludgarde Falle. She took the habit on February 2nd, 1644, was clothed on October 6th the same year, and professed on November 19th, 1645. Her religious name was Mary Constantia of the Holy Sepulchre.

Ann Barbara Plenevaux was a daughter of the Burgomaster of Liége, M. Nicholas de Plenevaux, who rendered many important services to the

rising community. Her mother's name was Marie Randach. She took the habit on November 10th, 1644, was clothed on January 1st, 1645, and professed on January 14th, 1646, aged twenty. Her religious name was Ann Frances of the Seraphim, but she was usually known as Mother Seraphina. She seems to have inherited the business talents of her father, for she acted as Procuratrix from the very first, and at the first Chapter she was elected to that office. She was also Subprioress, but she did not die at Liège, for in September, 1678, she was sent to "reform" the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre at Bouillon.¹ By the expression "reform," we may probably understand that she was sent as Superior to introduce into that house the Constitutions which her own community observed at Liège. Mother Seraphina only laboured there for two years, as she died on September 23rd, 1680. We have evidence that a sisterly union existed between the two convents for a long time, but we have no record of the dispersion of the house at Bouillon at the time of the French Revolution, when it probably shared the fate of the other convents. It was never re-established.

It is not true that any part of the property formerly belonging to Mrs. Ward's Company passed with some of the members to the English Sepulchrines, as stated in the interesting Life of that holy woman.² If any of our first Mothers had worn another religious habit, the fact would have been mentioned in our registers. The house and garden on the Pierreuse were purchased in 1644, but Mrs. Ward's Company was dissolved in 1631. Probably the mistake has been made by Belgian writers, who confused the two English communities, all the more readily that both were very kindly encouraged by the English Fathers of the Society of Jesus. The Abbé Daris gives the name of "Jésuitesses" to our first Mothers, even after they had left the house on the Pierreuse, and it is probably on his authority that the same thing has been repeated.

We now proceed to describe, from the Relation, the remarkable manner in which they took possession of their new house :

They took possession of that house on Christmas Day, in the morning of the year '44, having first assisted at Mattins at midnight, and heard High Mass in the Church of the English College of the Society of Jesus, and from thence they went all together to their new house between two and three o'clock in the morning. About eight o'clock, Father Joseph Simons came to them, and heard their confessions, said Mass in their new chappel, and at the end of it gave the Religious the Communion, and made them a short exhortation.

¹ Founded in 1622.

² Vol. ii. p. 455.

It is time to say a few words about this Father Joseph Simons to whom Mother Susan Hawley and Mother Margaret had been so much indebted for his exertions in their behalf in 1642, in obtaining the necessary permission for the foundation of the English convent at Liége, who was their first confessor, and who introduced them into their new convent with so much fatigue to himself as above related. He was certainly the Father Emmanuel Lobb, *alias* Father Joseph Simeon, who in 1669, when Provincial, received James II., then Duke of York, into the Church. A very interesting notice of him is given in Brother Foley's *Records*. He continued to be the trusted adviser of the community until he was appointed Rector of the English College at Rome in 1647. Up to this date his name occurs several times in our Examination Register, and we find it there again in August, 1650. In the decree of a Visitation made at the Pierreuse by the Vicar General, Jan. de Chokier, December 5th, 1651, one of the arrangements made was, that besides their ordinary confessor, "Sieur d'Oupey," the nuns might have recourse, for their spiritual consolation, in the absence of "Father Joseph," to the Rector of the English College of the Society of Jesus, who was then Father James Mumford.

Father Simeon succeeded Father Mumford as Rector in 1652, and no doubt the nuns again had recourse to him. He was always spoken of with affectionate familiarity in the community as Father Joseph. Later on, when Provincial in England, he must have interested himself in procuring alms for the English convent, for in 1668-9 there are several entries in our Book of Benefactors of alms received from Father Joseph Simons, Provincial. A manuscript retreat docketed by Father Joseph is carefully kept. One very beautiful and stirring meditation, very familiar to us all, on the "Particular end of a Religious of the Holy Sepulchre," is by him.

Mother Margaret of the Holy Sepulchre continued to govern the community at the Pierreuse for six years longer, but she was anxious to retire into private life in her own monastery, where she was much wanted. We now return to the Relation, which unfortunately gives us no single fact that happened after Father Simeon's short exhortation on Christmas morning.

Now their numbers began to encrease still more and more, so that in the space of seven years following they professed among them fourteen besides the three above mentioned, so that in all they were twenty-two in number professed. Mother Margaret, who had governed hitherto in the quality of Superiour by ordina-

tion only, but not by election, judged this community sufficiently able to depend of itself, and was desirous to return back to the monastery of Tungers from whence she came, so upon that account her Superiour call'd her back in the year 1651, and ordained another, by name Mother Mary of the Conception, to govern in her place for the space of two years, until such time as the community was consisting of twelve capitulars sufficient to elect a Superiour of their own choice, which election was performed at the end of the two years upon the 25th of November, 1652, and was capitularly chosen the sayd Rev. Mother Mary of the Conception, stable Prioress, the Chapter consisting of fifteen capitulars.

Some may wonder why the Chapter was put off for so long. The reason was that the newly professed were not exempted from their three years in the noviceship after profession, though the time was shortened in the case of a few of them. The following list will be found to complete the number of fifteen chapter nuns.

Mother Aloysia Chichester, whose name in the world was Elizabeth, was a daughter of Amias Chichester, Esq., and Susanna Plater. She was born at Arlington in Devonshire. She was the first choir novice who entered at the Pierreuse, and she was professed there on January 16th, 1649, aged twenty-eight.

Elizabeth and Dorothy Daniell, whose religious names were Flavia of St. Joseph and Domitilla of the Annunciation, were daughters of John Daniell, Esq., and Catherine Giffords, and they were born at Acton Place, Suffolk. These two sisters received the habit at the early ages of fourteen and thirteen and were both professed at the canonical age of sixteen, Mother Flavia on August 18th, 1649, and her sister on August 24th, 1650. She had received the habit on November 11th, 1647, but was of course obliged to wait for her sixteenth birthday for her profession. She was only about eighteen at the time of the Chapter, so that she must have been dispensed on the score of age, as twenty is the age required for a chapter nun. She survived until August 15th, 1719, when she died at about eighty-five years of age, after seventy-two years of religious life. She was generally known as Mother Dorothy, and seems to have dropped the use of her religious name. Mother Flavia's life was much shorter, for she died on February 5th, 1669.

Mother Agnes of St. Clare, whose secular name was Barbara Houthem, was a native of Liège. She was professed on July 12th, 1649, aged seventeen. She too had a very long life, for she survived till 1715. Mother Jane of St. Austin Liverlo or Liverloz was also from Liège. She was professed on October 18th, 1649, at sixteen years of age, so that at the time of the Chapter

she was only nineteen. She was the fourth of the community to die, and the last to die at the *Pierreuse*, where her death took place on March 10th, 1656, at the early age of twenty-three.

Mary and Ann Hildesley were daughters of William Hildesley, Esq., of Little Stoke, Oxfordshire, and Ann Hawkins. They were probably related to the foundress, whose mother's name was also Hawkins. Mary took the name of Mary Catherine of the Visitation, and Ann that of Ann Margaret of the Blessed Trinity. They were professed on February 15th, 1650, at the ages of twenty-six and twenty-four.

Our list of capitulars closes with the two sisters, Ann and Mary Simeon. They were daughters of Sir John Simeon and Ann Sulyard, and were born at Haughley Park in Suffolk. Mary was the elder of the two, but Ann got the start of her in Religion, though only by a few months. She took the religious name recently left vacant by the death of Mother Josephine Collings, viz., Josephine of Jesus. She took the clergess's habit on January 16th, 1649. It may be as well to explain that clergess is the term employed for the postulant after she has taken part of the religious habit. The word scholar is used in the Relation, borrowed probably from English convents of other Orders, but in the foreign houses of the Holy Sepulchre the word clergess was always used, and it came into use in our convent at a very early date. The clergess is not bound to the Divine Office, so that if for any cause she is absent from choir, she does not recite it alone. In order to accustom her by degrees to regular observance, she goes to Matins only every other day, and makes but one meditation. There are other differences, one of which is the variable length of time of the clergesship, which now generally lasts for about a year, but was much shorter at first, for Ann Simeon was clothed on February 14th of the same year, and professed February 19th, 1650. Mary Simeon took the name of Mary Francis of the Holy Ghost, and was professed with Sister Dorothy Domitilla of the Annunciation. In our obituary, Ann is called Mother Joseph Simons, and Mary is named Mother Francis Simons. In the profession register the name appears as Simmions, but there is a great variety in the spelling of all the family names of the nuns of this period. The simple name of Green is given in four different ways in our registers, Green, Greene, Grene, and Grinn.

The lay-sisters who entered at this early time were Sister Jane Berthe and Sister Alexia Damanet, who both entered at Barbeau, and were both from Liège or its neighbourhood. Sister Margaret Winand was also from Liège, and she joined the community at *Pierreuse*. The first English lay-sister

also was professed there. This was Sister Francis of St. James Nandyke, born at Scatolton in Yorkshire, and daughter of Thomas Nandyke and Jane Holtby. In our obituary her name is entered as Vandyke. Father Thomas Babthorpe, S.J., examined her for her profession. The entry is as usual in French. He calls her "Mdle. Françoise Nandyke, fille du noble Seigneur Thomas Nandyke et de Mdle. Jeanne Holtbye." Sister Petronilla Berninde from Liége was the last lay-sister professed before the first Chapter.

At last the important day of the first Chapter came. The only particulars respecting it that have come down to us are contained in the following entry copied from an old register :

"Anno Domini 1652, on the 25th of November, was canonically elected Prioress of the Monasterie of St. Hellen of the Order of the Canonesses Regular of the Holy Sepulcher the Rd. Mother Marie of the Conception, being present at this election the Rd. and Noble Lord Ferdinand, Baron de Boholt, Deine of the Cathedrall Church of St. Lambert in Leedge, by commission of his highnesse our Prince and Bishop as it doth appeare by the insuing copie of his commission."¹

Ferdinand of Bavaria, the Prince Bishop of Liége, who had given permission for the foundation of the English convent in 1642, died in 1650. His nephew, Maximilian Henry of Bavaria, Dean of Liége, and coadjutor to his uncle, succeeded him as Archbishop of Cologne and Bishop of Liége and Hildesheim. Like his predecessors and successors, he had the title of Prince of Liége and of the Empire and many others.

The result of the election can have surprised no one, as Reverend Mother Susan Hawley had given great proofs of her wisdom, zeal, and energy. She only allowed the community one day of rest or rejoicing, and on November 27th the Chapter was again assembled for the other elections, which were as follows: Mother Francis of St. Ignatius Cary was elected Subprioress. She held her office for four years and a half only. Probably failing health was the cause of her deposition at the Easter elections of 1657, for she died on April 26th, 1659. No great Chapter was held in 1653, but the term of five years was reckoned from November, 1652, to Easter, 1658. The first Procuratrix was Mother Seraphina Plenevaux, who had acted as Procuratrix for some time before her election.

The three "discreets," or members of the Council were, Mother Mary Catherine Hildesley, Mother Constantia Vanbuel, and Mother Aloysia Chichester.

¹ See Appendix.

Besides the chapter nuns, there were at the time of the election, four young professed and five choir novices.

The following list will not be without interest. Mother Angelina Preston was a daughter of William Preston and Margaret Realton. She was born at Sedborough Park, Northamptonshire, and in Baptism received the name of Margaret. She was professed at seventeen years of age on November 11th, 1651, with the name of Margaret of the Angel Guardian. On the 1st of May the same year, occurs an entry in our obituary, "Mrs. Elizabeth Preston died. She was professed on her death-bed, aged fifteen." There is no other mention of her in our registers, so that she had probably not taken the first habit when the privilege of taking her vows on her death-bed was granted to her. She was almost certainly a younger sister of Mother Angelina. Many years later a third sister, Mary Preston, was professed, at the age of thirty-six, on St. Andrew's day, 1678. Her religious name was Mary Winefred. Mother Angelina and Mother Winefred both filled the office of Procuratrix more than once. Mother Angelina died December 26th, 1699, and Mother Winefred survived till February 25th, 1716.

Sister Mary Theckla Stanford was a daughter of John Stanford, Esq., and Frances Persall. She was from Abbots Canford in Warwickshire. She was professed on the 15th of August, aged twenty-one, and took for her title "the Assumption." She died on March 2nd, 1654, when scarcely twenty-three years of age, while still a young professed. She was the third of the community to go to her reward.

Two younger sisters of Mother Catherine Hildesley were in the Novitiate at the time of the first Chapter. Susanna, the youngest of the four, was professed at the age of twenty-one, on September 8th, 1652, taking for her religious name, Magdalen of the Transfiguration. There is a little confusion in our registers about the age of the fourth sister, Catherine Hildesley. She was certainly not the youngest of the four. She was professed on June 26th, 1653. Her religious name was Catherine of St. Teresa. She is the Mother Mary Teresa Hildesley of our obituary.

Mary and Margaret Monica Foster were daughters of Brother Henry Foster, who after the death of his wife, Elizabeth Mason, entered the Society of Jesus as a lay-brother, and died in the odour of sanctity in 1679. His nine children were all Religious. Mary took the name of Mary Ann. She was professed on December 5th, 1652, aged twenty-five. She had only been professed for six months when she received her crown, on June 3rd, 1653. She was the second of the community to die. She lived to see her younger

sister professed on May 6th, 1653. Margaret Monica was then twenty-three years of age. She took the name of Catherine of St. Austin. She lived to a good old age, and died on October 6th, 1711. These sisters were born at Copdoke in Suffolk. With Mother Mary Anne Foster was professed Mother Ann of St. Sophia Downes, who became one of the pillars of the community. She was also from Suffolk. Her father's name was Thomas Downes, Esq., and her mother's was Grace Goddard. She was twenty-eight years of age at the time of her profession.

Mother Constantia of St. Christina, called in our obituary Mother Constantia Hyde, was a daughter of Richard Hyde, Esq., and Mary Smith, and was born at Penburne in Oxfordshire, though perhaps Pangbourne in Berkshire is the place meant. She was professed on April 27th, 1653. At the time of the first election, therefore, there were twenty-four choir nuns, all of whom were professed except five. There were five professed lay-sisters, only one of whom was English.

Reverend Mother Susan Hawley, in the very year of her election, published a small book of about fifty pages, which may be called a sort of advertisement of her foundation. Its title is, *A Brief Relation of the Order and Institute of the English Religious Women at Liege*. It bears the *Imprimatur* of the Vicar General, Jan de Chokier, and the date September 27th, 1652. By far the largest part of this little work is taken up with the history of the Order, abridged from Father Mumford's MS., but it also gives a very good summary of the Constitutions. Very few changes have taken place in the order of the day since the following extract was written, and it is interesting to read such a detailed account of the manner of life at the convent on the Pierreuse. The greatest deviations from present practice are, the going to bed at half-past eight instead of nine, working from after Matins till half-past seven, which was only possible when Communions were much fewer than they are now, and the hour of dinner, which made the recreation and the recollection hour both earlier than they are now. The work-room seems to have been called the work-house even after the nuns came to England. We now proceed to give the extract, p. 59 :

"As for their Rule, they follow the Rule of St. Austin; under which the Chanon Regulars of all places have so much flourished, yet for their greater perfection, the Religious Chanonesses of this congregation oblige themselves to follow particular Constitutions, made for them with very great spirit and prudence, by drawing into a better form the regular Statutes of this Order, and their Constitutions formerly set forth, as it is said in the

Apostolical Letters of Urban the Eighth, dated Anno 1631, Decemb. 18, where it is also expressed, *That these Constitutions thus newly compiled, do very much avail for the fuller observance of the former Rules, and for the perfection of a spiritual life.* Wherefore His Holiness doth approve and confirm them. These Constitutions do not oblige under any sin at all, but the observance of them containeth very great perfection joined with much sweetness. I will set down here some few particulars.

“The Chanonesses rise at four in the morning, and go to bed at eight and a half. From half an hour after four, they meditate mentally until five. At five they begin to say their Mattins, Lauds, and Prime. The tone in which they read their Office, is a clear, plain, distinct, and devout tone, with a pause in the middle, and end of every verse. Upon great festival days they may sing part of it. When now towards six o'clock all their devotions be ended in the Quire, they go from thence two and two together procession wise to the work-house. If the weather be cold, they first warm themselves. Their work is begun with a short prayer. In time of work, some of the elder sit mingled with the younger, for their assistance, and the better observance of order. To take away all tediousness there is for some time read some pious book, other times some profitable example is recounted, or some devout motetto is sung. At convenient times, the Reverend Mother (so they call their Prioress, or chief Superiour) permitteth them to discourse in a low voice with one another for some space, though this be done chiefly after dinner, and not constantly, but as circumstances require. At seven and a half they give over working, and retire to their chambers until eight. At eight, they go to the Quire, and first sing their Third Hour, and then hear Mass. After Mass they say the Sixth and Ninth Hour. It will be some time after nine a clock before all this be ended. Then they go as formerly to their work-house until ten and a half. At which hour the bell ringeth to Examen, and all examine their consciences for almost a quarter, so that about ten and three quarter they begin dinner. During dinner one readeth at the table, which lasteth about half an hour. After table, they recreate together for three quarters of an hour, and then it being twelve a clock, they retire to their chambers until one.¹ At one, they all go to the work-house, where they entertain² themselves until it be towards three, in the manner above said. At three the bell ringeth to Vespers, and doth not give over until all the Religious, coming two and two together from the work-house,

¹ An hour of recollection and spiritual reading.

² In silence with manual labour.

and be entered the Quire. Their Vespers last towards half an hour. Then, according to the ancient devotion of this Order, they make some Station in memory of the Passion of our Saviour; for example, on Monday they make their Station to the Garden of Gethsemany, visiting in spirit our dear Lord in His Bloody Sweat, &c.

“Thus the seven days of the week are divided by them into seven Stations, by which means they still dwell in spirit in the Holy Land, where their Order so much flourished, having most goodly monasteries at all the chiefest Holy Places, as you may see in Pennottus. At different Stations they have different Prayers set down in their book call'd The Ceremonial; and at the end of this Prayer, every one stretcheth forth her arms in the form of a Cross, and maketh mentally an act of the love of God, or other acts according to her devotion. When these devotions are ended they go again to the work-house until it be five a clock. Then they go to say their Compline in the Quire. At the end of Compline they read the Points for their next Meditation, which now presently begins, it being now the half-hour after five, and endeth at six. Then they go to Supper. After Supper, they Recreate until seven and a half. Then for the space of half a quarter, they examine their consciences, then they say our Ladies Litanies, and the Points for the next morning's Meditation are read unto them; then a *De profundis* is said for the souls in Purgatory, and so all retire with most deep silence to their Chambers, and by eight and a half all must be in Bed. Those who have offices, follow also this distribution, as far as their office will permit.

“These be the daily actions of these Religious, and their Constitutions teach them to perform every one of these actions in a most pious manner, treating of each action in a Chapter apart. Every day also, at such times as they retire to their chambers, they have their Spiritual Lectures; they say the Office of the Immaculate Conception; they take some little time to consider their defects and hindrances from perfection, making daily a particular Examen against that which most hinders them, or of that which may most further them in Virtue. It is also commended to them to say sometimes a little Office of their glorious Father St. James the Just.

“Every Sunday they set some time apart to make a survey or review of all their actions done that week, that so they may mend what is found faulty, and polish what is yet less perfect. At the beginning of every month, they make the like survey or review of their actions done that month, which is a rare means to perfection. On Sundays and Holidays all communicate, and

diverse other days prescribed in their Order, as also on Thursdays in Advent and Lent."

Then follow paragraphs giving summaries of the rules regarding retreats, triduums, fasting and abstinence and other penances, the vows, the devotion known as the "Slavage," or bondage to Jesus and Mary, and the government of the house. A few lines only are given about the school, but these are precious as they prove that a small school was kept even then. The passage runs thus: "This Order admitteth Convictrices, or Pensioners, who be yet children, or young gentlewomen, desirous of good breeding. These they bring up until they be ripe enough to choose some state of life. They teach them all qualities befitting their sex, as writing, reading, needle-work, French, musick . . ."

This may suffice for a brief notice of this Order. "As for the Religious, they have in these few years so advanced their new House, that now they have admitted twenty-four for the Quire, all English except four, who also are not ignorant of the English language. They have the comfort to have an English Colledge of the Society of JESUS in the same city: so that they may still hope to receive all convenient spiritual assistance from the charity of these Fathers; which is no small benefit in extern countries."

On the inside of the paper cover of the booklet occurs the following direction: "The best and shortest way from England to Liege, is by Holland to Rotterdam, thence to Bois-le-duc, then to Maestricht, so to Liege."

Jan de Chokier, whose signature appears at the end of the book, was chosen by Ferdinand of Bavaria, Prince Bishop of Liége, in 1622, as his Vicar General. He was a friend to the Order for many years. His *Impri-matur* appears on the Book of Constitutions observed by the "Nuns of St. Walburge," and he promoted the printing of our Constitutions. He it was who examined most of our first Mothers and Sisters before the Clothing and Profession. He sometimes commissioned one of the Fathers of the English College of the Society of Jesus to fulfil this duty for him, but his own signature occurs in almost every case up to 1648, after which it only occurs twice in very feeble characters. Besides being Vicar General, he was a member of the Privy Council. Of this eminent ecclesiastic, the record preserved in the archives of the Cathedral of St. Lambert at Liége says that: "By his office of Vicar General he governed the diocese, and as a Privy Councillor he took an active part in the administration of the Principality. His activity was so great that in spite of his numerous occupations he still found time to publish twenty works."

CHAPTER III.

THE COQUINS. THE COMMUNITY AT THE FAUBOURG D'AVROY FROM 1656 TO 1770.

OUR first Mothers and Sisters were quite contented with their beautiful convent on the heights of the Pierreuse, but it was not to be their resting-place. While they were peacefully following their vocation, very stormy scenes were taking place in the city of their adoption, the particulars of which seem not to have been known to them, for the Relation says :

Now by reason of some revolution or rebellion of the city some few years after their settlement in that house, the Prince came and subdued it with an army, and to suppress and keep them in submission and duty to their Prince, he caused a fort or citadel to be built near the place where the monastery stood, so that a good part of their garden fell to be in the citadel, which made it to be uninhabitable for a community of Religious Women to be so near a garrison of souldiers. Upon this consideration, the Religious made a supplication to the Prince that he would be pleased to remove them to some more commodious place, having remained there about twelve years in all.

To find out the cause of these disturbances, we must go back to the very beginning of the century, when the Prince Bishop Ernest of Bavaria, uncle of Ferdinard and great-uncle of Maximilian Henry, transferred the right of electing the two Burgomasters from the Council of the nobility to that of the burghers ; but as great disorders followed from this arrangement, his nephew and successor, Ferdinand, restored the right of appointing the Burgomasters to the twenty-two "Commissaires" who possessed it before. The people were furious, and there were endless quarrels between the "Chiroux" or nobility, who supported the authority of the Prince, and the "Grignoux" or burghers. In 1637, the Count de Warfuse, who had been Minister of Finance to the King of Spain at Brussels, was convicted of malversation in his office. He fled to Liége, where he conceived the design of recovering the favour of his Sovereign by accomplishing the death of Sebastian de la Ruelle, the Burgomaster. He invited his victim to a banquet, and had him murdered by armed men after summoning a Dominican Father to hear his confession. The people rose and massacred Warfuse and sixty

of his soldiers, and also the *Echevin*, Theodore Fléron, his accomplice. It was not until 1648 that Ferdinand entered Liège, with the assistance of the Emperor's troops. The Burgomaster Hennet, who had repulsed him with the help of the city cannon the April before, was beheaded, as well as his predecessor, Bartélémy Roland. After this, Ferdinand decreed that one burgomaster should be chosen by the burghers, and one by himself. Maximilian Henry succeeded his uncle in 1650, and he soon began to build the citadel which gave so much annoyance to our nuns, but he remedied the grievance by a measure so drastic as to be grotesque, so much so that in a recent publication at Liège, called *Les Rues de Liège*, its truth has been called in question, but there is no doubt about the matter. We quote from our old Relation :

His Highness was pleased to take their request into consideration, and thereupon procured a place for them called the Coquins, who were but nine in number, that had lived and enjoyed a good foundation, whose life not being so exemplar as was requisit, but living without much concord and too much liberty, His Holiness thought fit to suppress and extinguish the Order, and gave the revenues and the house belonging to them to the English Religious. This house was antiently founded to give hospitality to pilgrims that went to visit the Holy Land, being obliged to lodge 16 pilgrims, if so many came, every night for the space of half a year only, which is from All Saints till Palm Sunday ; and the said pilgrims were not to lodge more than three nights at a time, and then they were to retire to make room for others ; but now by length of time this is come to decay, and few pilgrims to visit the Holy Land, so that now the 16 first poor people that present themselves, passengers or others, are accepted to lodge in the hospital for the three nights as is above sayd. This foundation being thus bestowed by His Holiness upon the English Religious of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, it was then questioned how to put them in possession of it, by reason of the great opposition of a considerable part of the chief men of the town and country who were very unwilling that strangers should possess a foundation so many years enjoyed by those of the town. The Coquins themselves were very rebellious in that, and cou'd be brought by no means to yield up their right, nor leave their house, so that His Holiness at last was resolved to excommunicate them for their disobedience to his commands. The Prince, seeing there was no means left to bring them to yield to the Pope's orders, having advised them several times to submit, but could not prevail, at length gave orders that secular power should be used according to orders from Rome, and so one morning when they least thought of it, a troop of souldiers were sent to surround their house, and take them out by force, and carry them all to prison, which was performed between 1 and 2 o'clock in the morning upon the 1st of April, 1655. This being done, three or four days after the Rev. Mother Prioress, being accompanied with another Religious, and

the Bourgemaster Plenevaux, with Major Fleron, an officer to the Prince, went to take possession of the house, which was found in a very ruinous condition, great part of the house being very old, and no ways fit to lodge the community of Religious in; wherefore it was judged more convenient to leave the greatest part of the community at Peeruse, until such time as they could build a Church for their better accommodation. This said church and a quire they began to build in the month of May following, which was finished in so reasonable a manner by the next Easter that they were able to make use of it, and then the whole community came from Peeruse to this house, and left that to the Prince's disposal, according to the agreement they had before made with his Highness. The Religious were to enjoy all the privileges belonging to them, at their first coming into this foundation; they were ordered by the Prince to give half of all the revenues which were received, to be divided amongst the nine Coquins, which was performed for some time; but the Coquins not being satisfied with that, made petition to the Prince to have their pension increased, pretending they cou'd not subsist with what was first allowed 'em; so that it was determined they should each of them receive yearly about 23 pound at four several times from three months to three months.

Who were these Coquins? They were originally called Brothers of the Hospital of St. Christopher. They were lay-Religious following the Rule of St. Augustin. The equivocal name of Coquin is said to originate from the fact that one of their duties was to distribute to the poor food cooked by themselves, but it had long been used of them as a term of reproach for the carelessness of their lives. So far back as 1342 the Prince Bishop Adolphus de la Marck had limited their number to ten, nine professed, and one novice. At different times the Bishops of Liége had taken measures for the better administration of the hospital, and for the reformation of the brethren. At the time of their suppression they were deeply in debt, and as the Relation tells us, the house was in a ruinous condition, and the hospital was rebuilt in 1657. A publication called *Histoire et Souvenirs, Les Rues de Liége Anciennes et Modernes* (Théodore Gobert, Fasc. iii.) gives a hitherto unpublished contemporary version of the expulsion of the Coquins. The author was evidently one of the "Grignoux," and the account is written in a spirit of hostility to the reigning Prince, who is charged with having purposely sown discord among the Coquins, so as to have a plea for their suppression, that he might bestow their house and revenues on the English nuns in exchange for their convent on the Pierreuse, which he desired to possess. He gives the night between July 11th and 12th, 1652, as the date of the imprisonment, and says the attack was accomplished by German soldiers and some "Chiroux." The date is certainly inaccurate. He says

that the Coquins were forced to give up all their registers and documents. We know from other sources that they burnt many of them while their expulsion was pending, but very many of them still exist. They were not the least troublesome part of the heavy luggage brought from Liège by the nuns. M. Théodore Gobert thinks the account has been exaggerated, because original documents are missing. The reason is that they are safe in our archives. He seems to agree with the unknown author in believing that the irregularities of the Coquins were not so great as to justify their dissolution, but it must be remembered that they were not suppressed for any notorious crime, but for mal-administration, idleness, and discord. The remarks of this periodical are the first attempt to justify the Coquins that has ever come under our notice. Not an atom of pity for them appears in any of our papers.

The same periodical publishes, from the archives of Liège, the deed by which the Reverend Mother Prioress and community of the English convent made over their house and gardens on the Pierreuse to his Serene Highness Maximilian Henry, Prince Elector of Cologne, Prince Bishop of Liège, in gratitude for the favour he has done them by obtaining from Pope Innocent X., of holy memory, the suppression of the Order of Frères Coquins in the Faubourg d'Avroy, and the granting to them of the said house, revenues, &c. The convent undertakes to continue the distribution of certain doles, and stipulates that if the Coquins should succeed in getting the suppression revoked, then the deed of cession should be considered null, and the said Religious should return to their full rights over the house on the Pierreuse. The deed was drawn up on April 7th, 1655, in the convent parlour at the Pierreuse, in presence of the "Honoré Seigneur Nicolas de Plenevaux, cy devant bourgmestre de la cité de Liège," and François d'Aigremont as witnesses. Then follow the signatures of the foundress and of all the professed choir nuns, twenty-one in all, for three had already died, Mother Josephine Collins or Collings, Mother Mary Anne Foster, and Mother Theckla Stanford. The document is in French, and the signatures also. The list contains only the religious names. It is subjoined in English, and the family names are added for greater clearness.

Mary of the Conception. Susan Hawley, Prioress Unworthy.

Frances of St. Ignatius. Frances Cary, Subprioress.

Ann Francis of the Seraphim. Barbe Plenevaux, Procuratrix.

Helen of the Cross. Jane Cary.

Paula of the Passion. Jane Greene.
 Constantia of the Holy Sepulchre. Anne Marie Vanbuel.
 Aloysia of the Presentation. Elizabeth Chichester.
 Flavia of St. Joseph. Elizabeth Daniell.
 Jane of St. Augustin. Jane Liverloz.
 Agnes of St. Clare. Barbe Houthem.
 Mary of St. Catherine. Mary Hildesley.
 Anne of St. Margaret. Anne Hildesley.
 Josephine of Jesus. Anne Simeon.
 Dorothy of the Annunciation. Dorothy Daniell.
 Mary of St. Francis. Mary Simeon.
 Margaret of the Angel Guardian. Margaret Preston.
 Magdalen of the Transfiguration. Susanna Hildesley.
 Mary of St. Sophia. Anne Downes.
 Constantia of St. Christina. Constantia Hyde.
 Catherine of St. Augustine. Margaret Monica Foster.
 Catherine of St. Teresa. Catherine Hildesley.

In the month of May, 1656, the community moved from the Pierreuse to the Faubourg d'Avroy. The chapel, which had been so happily completed, was a very handsome one, according to the writer above quoted, very like the chapel of the convent of Beauregard,¹ but double the size of this last. Very soon, as the community increased, it was found necessary to build, and nothing less than a new convent was undertaken, as the Relation must declare :

The community increased more and more, to the number of 35 or 36, and the old building not being sufficient to lodge them, having but 9 or 10 rooms in all, it was judged proper to begin a new monastery. Here it is that God's divine Providence is to be taken notice of, for the Religious being destitute of means to undertake a new building after the expense they were at for the Church, quire, and speak-houses, the first year, they were not in a condition to undertake so soon a new building, when beyond all expectation it pleased God that a gentleman of our Nation, and an acquaintance, by name Mr. William Gregory Cary, dying in Spain, left to our house a legacy of 80 pound in consideration of a sister of his a religious of this Monastery, and the said money was all applied in laying the foundation of the new Monastery, which was in a manner finished the year following, 1660. But this sum being soon spent in that affaire, the Procuratrix was in great care where to gett more to pay the workmen; so that often when

¹ A Premonstratensian monastery at Liège.

Saturday night was come, at which time they were to be payed, she would bid them come no more, and so gave them their hire, but by God's Providence, the Sunday following which was post day then from England, we received good news of Money, and presently the workmen were sent for to come the next day (Munday) and continue their work: and it is even a miracle to see how this fine new building was finished, and a few years after not being a farthing in debt; and God was pleased to prosper it, in that year we had the finest weather that cou'd be wished, for fine showers of rain fell in the night and the days were so fair, that scarce did the workmen lose two days for bad weather, and the winter was so favourable until Christmas Eve, that we worked till then, and got the building covered.

Thus the Relation comes to an abrupt end.

The following amusing episode in our history is taken from *Les Rues de Liège*. The Sepulchrines had not only inherited the property of the Coquins, but also enjoyed their rights with regard to the Church of St. Christopher. Every year on the eve of St. John the Baptist, the Curé of that parish was bound to proceed to the former house of the Coquins, and there in presence of the nuns' chapter present the key of the said Church of St. Christopher, the choir, sacristy, and cemetery of the said church, in order to testify that he owed his appointment to the Sepulchrines.¹ In 1662, he wished to evade this duty under the plea of his infirmities. The Prioress of the English nuns let him know that he might substitute for himself either one of his chaplains, or some other person of sufficient authority, and that if he refused, he would produce trouble in the service of the Church. At last, when the Prioress threatened to bring an action against him, he sent the keys by the "Grand Marlier" or beadle.

The following year, the Pastor had to appear at the convent in presence of a notary and witnesses. The "Grand Marlier" restored the keys to the Curé, who then placed them in the hands of the Prioress, thus recognizing her as "vraie patronnesse et collectrice" of the said Church of St. Christopher, and desiring to observe the customs. After this act of recognition, all the officials of the said church were permitted to resume their functions. In 1665, the Sepulchrines got rid of this troublesome right by ceding it to the Prince Bishop.

We know from our own papers, that in September, 1663, the Prince Bishop proposed that the community should either "forgo all right of collating the Pastorall of St. Christopher" (*sic*), or be indemnified for expenses incurred

¹ "Afin de témoigner qu'il tenait des Sépulchrines ses pouvoirs pastoraux," are the words of the periodical.

at the Coquins, and return to the Pierreuse, and that the Chapter chose the last alternative. A few days later the Prince proposed to the Chapter to receive no less a sum than 100,000 florins, and surrender both houses, and the Chapter again consented, but nothing came of either proposition. The whole episode has so completely died out of memory, that the above paragraph would have been an enigma to us, had not some light been thrown upon it by the periodical above quoted.

The same periodical tells us that a neighbouring street or "Ruelle" was also made over by the Prince to the Sepulchrines at their request, but we know from our own registers that the nuns bought up several small houses close to the convent, with the intention of forming a good quadrangle which they accomplished, so that the street was a purchase, not a gift.

The community continued to receive not only kindness and attention, but very liberal alms from all ranks at Liège, even from the poor. In the new convent there was scarcely a gallery or window, which being the gift of some friend, was not decorated with the arms of the donor. The three families of Plenevaux, Vanbuel, Randach, were among their greatest benefactors. Fortunately, the book in which benefactions are registered is still in our possession. It dates from April 21st, 1662. The first entry is of a gift for the building from the great dean of St. Lambert, "to putt his armes up—18 florins." Canon Henin makes several donations. Many gifts to the chapel are registered. "The building of ye chapel of ye Sepulcher with part of ye materials by Sister Margaret Winand's mother."

"By Mr. Wilmart a Secular Priest the varnishing and gilding of ye Tabernacle, and as wee suppose by the Same Person a Crowne and Scepter to our Blessed Lady's Image in ye quire, and a Crowne to little Jesu."

"By an unknown friend a silver box to keep the holy Oyles in."

"By Mr. James Hodege, Cannon of St. Paule, a Rownde Silver box for ye Blessed Sacrament; and a silver hand to point in ye Missell by ye Chaplin."

The following year 1663-64, Mr. Wilmart gives "the images and accommodations of ye Sepulcher in ye Chapel, and procured us at ye same time ye confraternity thereof." The Confraternity of the Holy Sepulchre here alluded to, was the fruit of the zeal of Mother Susan Hawley, and does not seem to have been established in any other house of the Order. It was founded with the view of promoting devotion to the Passion. It was approved by Pope Alexander VII., in a brief dated April 10th, 1663, the 8th of his Pontificate, and in the same brief great Indulgences are granted to the members on the feasts of St. Helen, August 18th, St. James, May 1st,

the Dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, July 15th, the great feasts of our Lady and others, and innumerable partial Indulgences are granted for every good work done by the brethren and sisters. The devotion became very popular at Liége; numbers were enrolled in the confraternity, and the convent chapel used to be thronged on the feasts above named. Reverend Mother Christina Dennett had the book reprinted with some alterations in 1779, and a third edition was printed in English in 1871, but the confraternity has never really prospered in England.

To return to our benefactors. The windows must have nearly all been presents. Some were given by relatives of the nuns, as Mr. Hildesley, Mrs. Plenevaux, Mr. Labricque; and others were given by workmen employed by the nuns, with the intention of having their names enrolled in the book of benefactors, and thus securing prayers. Thus we read in 1667: "A window given by Dirich Fimbre, our glazier, another by Michel La Tour, our tyler, another by Lancelot, our butcher." In March, 1669, we find the following entry: "Given by Mary the Washerwoman for to have her name written in the book of benefactors, and to have her service made when she dye, with a dirge, a High Mass, and a Communion by all the Community, and to have a Mass upon the anniversary day at ye year's end of her death, 35 florins." "Given by Fr. Joseph Simons, Provincial, to pray for a gentlewoman living, 33 florins." There are several similar entries showing that Father Joseph helped his Liége nuns in the midst of all his cares and labours. One of the most generous benefactors of those days was Sir John Webbe, father of Mother Monica Webbe. Besides all sorts of gifts he was very careful to obtain prayers for his relatives and friends when they died. Thus in little more than a year, in 1670 and 1671, three donations were made by him for his daughter, Dame Agatha, a nun at Ghent, for his servant, Elizabeth But, and for his son.

During all this time the school was very small, seldom numbering more than six or seven children. Besides their choir duties the nuns continued to serve the "hospital" for pilgrims until 1711. We have no record of what their duties precisely consisted in, but they were found to be so inconvenient that in that year the nuns petitioned to be released from them, and they undertook in exchange certain doles of corn and bread, of which we shall hear more at the time of the disturbances in Liége in 1789.

The names of some of the novices who were not professed should be mentioned. That of Lady Warner, whose life is so well known, is full of interest. From her earliest years, though a Protestant, she had an extra-

ordinary attraction for a religious life, and at one time had obtained her father's consent to enter the Order of St. Benedict in a convent at Paris, though the thought of changing her religion had not then occurred to her. It is curious to find that in 1658, in order to escape the importunity of a baronet, who was one of her suitors, she obtained her father's consent to live for a time at Mr. Hawley's at Brentford. This was the former home of Reverend Mother Susan Hawley, and here she probably first heard of the English convent of the Holy Sepulchre at Liège. Her biography merely mentions that the "Religious she desired to go to were of the Order of St. Austin, commonly called Sepulchrines, who honour St. James the Apostle as their founder, and by their regularity and exact observance had justly gained themselves so great a reputation both at home and abroad, as hereby they had obtained a very ample foundation from the Prince of Liège, and so considerable assistance of others, as to build themselves a fair and convenient monastery." She was recommended to the community by Father Travers, S.J., who had received her and her husband into the Church. She came accompanied by her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Warner, and a relative named Ursula Skelton. They took the habit on November 21st, 1664, and were clothed on April 29th the following year, but from the first Lady Warner felt unsettled, and desired a life of greater austerity and seclusion. She wished to join the Carthusianesses, but they were not allowed to admit married women, so she decided to enter among the English Poor Clares at Gravelines. Sir John Warner was satisfied with her decision, but opposed the departure of his sister and Ursula Skelton on the plea that the reputation of the Liège convent might suffer if three Religious went away together, yet the Sepulchrines themselves urged their departure when they were found to be unsettled. They were allowed to wear their religious habits during the journey to Gravelines, which was undertaken on July 24th, 1666. Before they left they assured the nuns that it was not for any want of edification in their house that they moved to another. The Mistress of Novices at Liège wrote concerning Lady Warner that Sister Teresa Clare, having lived in that community above a year and a half, was never known by any one to fail in any religious duty, never to speak an unnecessary word, or to have been found guilty of the least imperfection.

A sister of Mother Magdalen Hildesley the younger was clothed in 1698, taking the name of Sister Mary Agnes, and two other Sisters of the same name entered later on, but no one of these three was professed. Mother Teresa Hildesley, the last of the four sisters to be professed, but probably



EAST VIEW OF NEW HALL.

the oldest, survived her sisters and her niece. She died on June 7th, 1698.

The very short panegyric which has come down to us of Mother Susan Hawley, our foundress, represents her as a very gifted person indeed, and a very holy one. She was very large-minded, and was endowed with courage, and a firmness which nothing could shake. Her prudence was rare; her intellect quick and penetrating, and her judgment solid and enlightened, so that all who knew her recognized and admired these qualities in her. During the whole of her long period of government she showed the greatest zeal for regular observance, though with the sweetness and tenderness of a mother to her subjects, whom she animated to perfection in all the duties of religious life by her salutary instructions and counsels. Her devotion to the Passion of our Lord was tender in the extreme. In order to promote devotion to the sufferings and Death of our Lord she promoted with great energy and zeal the erection of the Confraternity of the Holy Sepulchre in the church of her convent. She was also singularly devout to our Blessed Lady, and loved to make frequent novenas and other devotions in her honour together with her Religious. She was exceedingly exact in the observance of the Rules herself until the infirmities of age forced her most unwillingly to accept some dispensations. She was remarkable for her humility and charity.

Her virtue was tested by the poverty from which the community began to suffer soon after the new convent had been completed, and which seems to have reached the stage of distress from about the year 1688 to 1710, or thereabouts. The bad times in England cut off relief from there, and the wars of which the Low Countries were the theatre, hindered them from obtaining anything from their foundation. This consisted chiefly of farms in different parts of the country of Liége. It is difficult to believe that the nuns made a good bargain when they resigned the convent on the Pierreuse for that on the Avroy, for notwithstanding their extreme poverty, they were obliged to pay the stipulated sum for the support of the Coquins, and there is evidence that this was done so late as 1694. Such entries as the following are frequent: "The house is wholly unprovided with corn and other provisions, as coal, wood, &c., the times continuing as calamitous as ever in the years preceding, by reason of war, and also the bad times in England." Another year, 1695, we read of a total want of all provisions, and little hope of ever receiving anything from the foundation. Another year the "estate" is said to be even chargeable to us, as the whole country is overrun with armies. But there is no record of any damage done to the convent during

the wars, even when the city was bombarded by the French in 1691, or when the allied army under the Duke of Marlborough took possession of it on October 14th, 1702.

Reverend Mother Susan Hawley had the grief of losing her first companion, Mother Ignatia Cary, in 1659. Many of her first spiritual children preceded her to the grave, as a glance at the list of the nuns professed at Liège will show.

From the first, we have seen that the nuns were very zealous for their choir duties. On great feasts these were very solemn, and the greatest part of the office was sung. The High Masses were frequent, and tradition tells us that the music in our convent was exceptionally good, which is no small praise when we know that Liège was celebrated for its ecclesiastical music. The name of one only of the convent musicians of this period has come down to us, that of Mother Constantia Levray, of whom it is recorded that "God gave her good talents to play on the lute and organ and to sing." Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament seems not to have been established until 1680, when Mr. Hodege, Canon of St. Paul's Church and Chantry, assigned the half part of the price of the sale of his furniture to founding twelve Benedictions at the English convent. The days for these Benedictions were All Saints, Christmas Day, Easter Day, Whit Sunday, and Corpus Christi, with the octave of that feast. It seems to be a safe conclusion that if such days were chosen there can have been no Benediction on any other day. In 1700, a legacy of 300 crowns was accepted from Madame Everard for a weekly Mass on Thursdays in honour of the Blessed Sacrament for the repose of her soul, and Benediction after it, and six singing Masses in the year on days appointed, but if these days fall on an ordinary day for singing Mass, this is to suffice for the obligation. We are indebted to Reverend Mother Marina Dolman for the Benedictions during the octave of the Holy Sepulchre.

Reverend Mother Susan Hawley celebrated her golden jubilee of profession with great solemnity in 1692, and soon after she began to yearn for a more retired life, to be spent in prayer and preparation for death. With great humility she besought to be released from her office of Prioress which she had borne for forty years. She did not obtain her resignation until January 22nd, 1698, when the Chapter was held for the election of her successor. It was presided over by Father Lewis de Sabran, S.J., by commission from his Lordship, William Bernard Hinnisdael, Coadministrator and Vicar General of Liège. The choice of the Chapter fell on Mother

Marina Dolman, who was then filling the office of Subprioress for the second time. The Vicar General praises her very much in his confirmation of the election. He knows her capacity, prudence, and zeal, and therefore approves the election, &c. Mother Marina was about fifty-five years of age at the time, and had been professed nearly thirty-nine years. On February 18th, Mother Angelina Preston was chosen Subprioress, and she continued in that office until her death on December 26th, 1699. On March 10th the same year, Mother Helen Cary had closed her long religious life of fifty-four years by a holy death. In the autumn of 1696, she had asked to be released from her duties as discreet.

Of Mother Susan Hawley we read that "she spent the nine years of her retirement in continual prayer. She was afflicted with many infirmities, which she bore with heroic patience. During her last illness her conversation was always on the happiness of her vocation, and the great desire she had to die, so as to possess God. At last she asked for, and received the Sacraments of the Church with very great devotion, and words so tender and full of piety as to cause all who were present to weep. She gave her soul into the hands of her Creator on the same day on which He deigned to be born for love of us; to receive, as we have every reason to hope, the recompense of so virtuous a life."¹

If we know little about our other Prioresses, we know still less of Mother Marina Dolman, for not even a mortuary notice of her has been preserved. Her regulations prove that she had the worthy celebration of the Divine Office much at heart, and that she had a special zeal for the liturgy of the Church. This we know, not from any panegyric, but from the regulations which she made, which are briefly chronicled in an old register. Some of the first Mothers survived and continued active for some years after she was made Prioress. Thus, Mother Dorothy Daniell was Subprioress from 1700 to 1705. She was first elected to the office in 1669, and filled it for twenty-one years in all, four times for the full term of five years. She survived till August 15th, 1719. Mother Paula Greene must have been a wonderful old woman, for she was elected Subprioress for the first time in 1705, when she was eighty-two years of age, and had been professed sixty years.

Among those who entered the Noviceship in Mother Marina's time, were the two eldest of the four sisters Petre, who were professed in succession, with special permission of the "Grand Vicair" for the third and fourth as is duly noted. The names of these sisters were Bridget, Penelope, Mary,

¹ Her mortuary notice.

and Winefred, who was older than Mary. A glance at the accompanying table will tell their ages. Another sister named Anne entered but did not persevere. Sister Mary Stanislaus was the only one who lived to be old. She was an extremely valuable member of the community. Mother Victoria Caryll was another who is remembered as having held the most important offices from not long after her profession. One of her younger sisters named Fanny Caryll entered the community, and was clothed in 1717, taking the name of Sister Mary Teresa, but she died on April 17th, 1718.

Like her predecessor, Reverend Mother Marina Dolman laid down her dignity when she became too infirm to discharge its duties with sufficient energy. She resigned on some day in May, 1720, and survived till September 25th, 1722.

The Chapter for the election of her successor was held on May 16th, 1720. It was presided over by the Bishop of Porphyry, Vicar General of Liège, assisted by Father Parker, S.J., Rector of the English College, and "Mr. Peter Wright, Confessarious of our community." Mother Susan de Rouveroit, the then Procuratrix, was chosen Prioress, and on the following day Mother Francis Xaveria Gerard was made Procuratrix in her place. The new Prioress was fifty years of age, and had been professed thirty years. She had always longed to consecrate herself to God in the religious state. Two of her elder sisters, who had become nuns, had quickly been raised to superiority in their respective convents, and she hoped entirely to escape from a similar burthen by joining an English community. Her fidelity to her Rule, and her fervour in every religious duty were conspicuous from the first, and instead of being forgotten, as she hoped to be, she was at a very early age chosen for the most important offices in the house, which she discharged with great success. She was chosen Procuratrix in 1700, and she was filling the same office for the third time when she was elected Prioress. The election was all the more remarkable that at the time she was the only choir nun who was not English, as Mother Clare Houthem, the last of the four Liège nuns, died July 16th, 1715. Mother Susan de Rouveroit did her utmost to escape the dignity, and urged that in an English convent the Superior should be English, but the Chapter were resolute, and the "Grand Vicair" silenced her objections; indeed the extreme firmness of both community and prelate were afterwards looked upon by the nuns as manifest signs that the election had been the work of God. The new Superior set about her work with cheerfulness and energy, and we are told that the choice was justified by a visible

increase in the community of exactitude in regular observance and fervour in prayer, especially the Divine Office, by an admirable spirit of union and charity, as well as of mortification, retirement, and silence. She was not only a model of these virtues, but also of a rapid progress in them after she became Prioress. She was remarkable for her sweetness and tenderness, yet she was strict in correcting the least infidelity in her subjects.

The temporal affairs of the house seem to have been in a brighter condition. This was partly owing to the liberality of Lady Goring, who took up her residence in the out-quarters of the convent in 1726, and remained there until her death, on January 8th, 1737. Her maiden name was Dorothy Plowden. The following short account of her has been preserved. "During the eleven years that she lived in the convent, she perfected those virtues which she had always practised in the world, where she had been the edification of all who knew her; but during her last retreat her life was a perfect pattern of every Christian virtue, in a word, that of a saint. Her large jointure of £1,000 per annum was entirely employed in charity to the poor and in pious donations, scarcely allowing herself the necessaries of life. The English College of the Jesuits was, at that time, as well as our own convent, in very straitened circumstances with respect to temporals. This generous and pious lady signalized every year of her residence at Liege by many truly noble donations and acts of beneficence to both houses. The wall which surrounded the garden of our convent was formerly so low as to expose us often to great inconvenience. We had not the means of remedying this annoyance, therefore this kind benefactress, at a very great expense, raised the wall to a respectable and proper enclosure height. Much against her will, an inscription on a large stone in the wall bore testimony to her benevolent charity and our gratitude. A great number of rich and valuable donations to our church and sacristy, as silver candlesticks, vestments, albs, surplices, reliquaries, besides members whom she portioned or pensioned, made her beloved by the community as a Mother. She closed a holy life by a holy death, January 8th, 1737, being 68 years old."

Mother Veronica Bailey and Mother Magdalen Revell succeeded one another in the office of Subprioress nearly all the time that Mother Susan de Rouveroit was Prioress. Among the novices who entered in her time were two members of a family which has always been looked upon as that of the greatest benefactors the house has ever known. These were Catherine and Elizabeth Stourton, daughters of the Hon. Charles Stourton and Catherine Frampton, of Bilson, Dorsetshire. Catherine was professed on October 13th,

1726, aged twenty, with the religious name of Sister Mary Angela. She became one of the pillars of the community. She was twice Procuratrix, and held other important offices. She lived to keep her golden jubilee and to witness the development of the community in Reverend Mother Christina Dennett's time. She died on the 29th of July, 1777. Elizabeth took the name of Sister Mary Sales. She was professed, at eighteen years of age, on May 7th, 1730. She died on April 7th, 1741, at about twenty-nine years of age. No tradition has come down about her except the one that is common to her family, that all the Stourtons were very holy.

There is an entry in the writing of Mother Victoria Caryll of the death on November 19th, 1733, in our convent, of Sister Mary Agnes Dacre, a Conceptionist nun. "On the 4th of October, by accident, a chimney took fire in a room near the sacristy at the Conception nuns at Liège, their monastery was in a manner quite reduced to ashes, so that there was no place left for them to inhabit. On the 6th of the same month, Sister Mary Agnes Dacre, who had been sick more than two years and was almost miraculously saved from the fire, was brought to our house, whom the Reverend Mother received, as also a lay-sister to attend her, and a servant. She died in our monastery, and was carried to her own monastery to be buried."

Reverend Mother Susan de Rouveroit went on increasing in fervour to the very last. She never allowed herself any exemptions until her last illness, which was long and painful. Even then she continued to edify the community by her patience and resignation to the will of God. At last, after receiving the last Sacraments of the Church, she died holily as she had always lived, in the seventy-first year of her age, and the fiftieth of profession, on October 6th, 1739. The grief of her spiritual children at her loss was very great.¹

There was no time lost in choosing her successor. The Chapter was held on October 15th, 1739, and Mother Christina Percy, the then Subprioress, was chosen Prioress. She was forty-eight years of age and had been professed twenty-eight years. Her vocation had been a very decided one, and she had overcome many obstacles in order to follow it. She had always been very fervent, and especially remarkable for her humility. On October 16th, Mother Victoria Caryll was chosen Subprioress, but it was only for a few months, for by the following Easter, Mother Austin Dormer, having completed her five years as Procuratrix, was chosen Subprioress, and Mother Victoria was made Procuratrix for the second time.

For some years there had been a great falling off in the number of choir

¹ From her obituary notice.

novices received. There was a gap of ten years between the profession of Sister Mary Teresa Harvey in 1731, and that of Mother James Tankred in 1741. Only four choir nuns in all were professed in the ten years of Reverend Mother Christina Percy's time, but she received a novice who may be said to have been a host in herself, and this was Sister Christina Dennett.

Mother Victoria Caryll has not failed to chronicle a flood which occurred in 1740. She writes: "The River Meuse overflowed its bank on the 13th December, St. Lucy's day. Our sellers were full. In the night they decreased, but returned again on St. Thomas' day. The 23rd the waters were in the church, and wanted only one step more at the enclosure door of being in the cloister, they then retired by degrees, but did not go quite away till January 12th, 1741." But Reverend Mother Percy had other temporal trials besides floods. There are several entries which show that the community underwent a time of as great poverty as any they had ever experienced. There were no provisions and there was no money to buy them. A benefactor made them a timely donation of £100 on condition that a weekly Mass should be said for him in the convent, and Mother Victoria observes that after some time we found out who this benefactor was. It was Robert, Lord Petre of Thorndon.

The last years of Reverend Mother Christina's life were spent in very great suffering, as she was attacked with cancer. A letter from Mother Magdalen Revell to her sister has been preserved at Stanington Grange, Sheffield, the residence of the Revells. Mother Magdalen was a cousin of Mother Christina, and she writes the following account of the terrible operation which the latter underwent: "I think I told you that Madame Pearcy had a lumpe grue in her brest, but fissions was in hopes to dispers it, but it grew wors, and there was no cuer but cutting, she resolved upon it, and it was done 7 days agoe, her brest was intirly coot of. A painfull operation but she boore it coragisly to admiration, the Doctor and Sugion both give great hopes and assuerns of her perfect recovery." The letter from which this extract is taken is dated August 21st, 1747. It fully bears out the words on her mortuary notice, that her last illness was very long, and her sufferings continual and very acute. Mother Magdalen does not fail to send a message to ask for an alms from her cousin Percy, because the poor invalid was more sensible of the expense to the community of the terrible operation she had undergone than of her own sufferings. She did not recover, but she survived for a year and a half, and died January 10th, 1749, at fifty-eight years of age and thirty-eight of religious profession. Mother

Magdalen Revell died on the 29th of the same month and year, at about seventy-five years of age, having been professed nearly fifty-four years. She was twice Subprioress for the full term of five years, both times while Mother Susan de Rouveroit was Prioress.

The Chapter for the election of the new Prioress was held on January 16th, 1749, under the presidency of the Dean, who was also Curé of St. Christopher's, and of Father Roels, the Rector of the English College, both deputed by "John Theodore, by the Grace of God Duke of the two Bavarias, Cardinal, Bishop, and Prince of Liege, of Freising, and of Ratisbon, Duke of the Upper Palatinate and of Bouillon, Count Palatine of the Rhine, Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, Langrave of Leuchtenberg, Margrave of Franchemont, Count of Looz, Horne, Baron of Herstalpe." The Chapter were unable to come to a decision, and left the choice to the Prince Bishop, who appointed Mother Xaveria Withenbury. Mother Xaveria was about forty-seven years of age. She is said to have been born of noble parents in Herefordshire. Her father's name was James Withenbury or Winbury, and that of her mother was Jane Slaughter. She had been professed twenty-six years, and does not seem to have been appointed to any very important office during all that time. She was a very gifted musician, so that her occupation was probably in this line. She had always been remarkable for her humility. She had been subject to bodily infirmities which caused her great suffering. We are not told what these were, but only that she practised heroic patience under them, and that she drew her strength from the Wounds of our Lord Jesus Christ, which she always contemplated with the tenderest devotion. We are told also that the Passion of our Lord was always present to her thoughts. She was also remarkable for her charitable compassion for the souls in Purgatory, so that she tried to let no opportunity escape by which she could help them. As Superior she always showed extreme tenderness for the sick. She was much with them, served them herself, took great pains to find out their wants, and consoled them by her kind and gentle words. She was assiduous in her choir duties, and very zealous for the worthy celebration of the Divine Office.

In Mother Xaveria Withenbury's time we read the same tale of poverty and scarcity, and the same instances of timely relief by benefactors. Thus the dowager Lady Stourton made a donation of £100 to the community for a weekly Mass to be said for her, which Rev. Mr. Robinson, the confessor, undertook to say as long as he lived at the convent. There were twenty-two professions of choir nuns, which was an advance upon the number professed

in Reverend Mother Percy's time. Among them were the three Prioresses who followed Mother Xaveria, viz., Mother Christina Dennett, Mother Austin Westby, and Mother Aloysia Clough, all three of whom have left a reputation for very high sanctity.

Mother Xaveria held the office of Prioress for twenty-one years. She had an attack of paralysis in the October of 1769, but had been in bad health for some months earlier. She resigned her office on February 28th, 1770, but she survived until May 29th, 1775. Her mortuary notice tells us that she died after a long and painful illness, suffered with exemplary patience and perfect submission to the will of God, fortified by all the rites of the Church, aged seventy-two years, professed fifty-two; that she had always been a model of modesty and recollection, and of a life animated by a spirit of faith, and that this strong faith showed itself especially in the last years of her life. When she was dying, and had entirely lost the use of speech, she suddenly as it were threw herself upon her crucifix, and held it in close embrace. Thus she ended her virtuous career, and appeared before the throne of a crucified God whom she had constantly followed and imitated in life and death.

This short panegyric is all that has come down to us concerning Mother Xaveria Withenbury, but we know that she was a good Superior to Mother Christina Dennett, and certainly had some share in training her, that she had a high esteem for her virtue and supported her in the trials to which she was exposed.

The Chapter for the election of her successor was held on March 7th, 1770, in presence of the "Grand Vicair," who was then the Comte de Rougrave, his secretary, the secretary of the Prince, Rev. Father Howard, Rector of the Jesuits, and Mr. James Robinson "our Confessor." Mother Christina Dennett was elected Prioress, and the election was confirmed by the Prince Bishop the same day.

CHAPTER IV.

REVEREND MOTHER CHRISTINA DENNETT.

THE name of Reverend Mother Christina Dennett has always been held in such veneration in the community, that a chapter must be devoted to her. We are fortunate in possessing a memoir of her, written eleven years after her death by Mother Joseph Smith, herself a person of very high attainments in the spiritual life, who had been a novice under Mother Christina. She afterwards held offices of trust in the community, and was later on one of the heroines of the transit from Liège to England. In 1852 Mother Magdalen Sales Poole rearranged the work, a change that was much needed. She also added some interesting details, and modernized the language, but this last change has scarcely been an improvement, and in the following pages Mother Joseph's words will generally be used. Though the MS. is far too long to be inserted whole, it is impossible to resist giving the original preface, all the more that it gives a very good general outline at once of Mother Christina's work, and of Mother Joseph's own religious spirit.

MOTHER JOSEPH SMITH'S PREFACE.

Obedience which has imposed upon me to commit to writing a short account of the Life and Instructions of our most Dear Reverend Mother Mary Christina Dennett, sixth Superior of this House, alone could ever have been able to have made me undertake so great a task, of which I see myself so entirely incapable. The Difficulty I find in expressing my Sentiments by my Pen, the few leisure moments which I can spare from my employments, and not a very good memory, all this helps to make this undertaking the harder. But still more, and what I the most lament, is not having profited more by her Example and Instructions, for had I made a proper and due use of them, I should have been better able to have recalled them, and given a more perfect account of the many Virtues, which shone forth, and adorned the mind of this great Servant of God. But were my abilities equal to her deserts, or the will and desire I have of giving you a true idea of her

merit, you would have a most perfect Copy of a true Religious of the Holy Sepulchre, such as our Constitutions describe we ought to be, truly dead to herself, and her life buried in Jesus Christ. For Almighty God gave her certainly in a very extraordinary manner the true Spirit of our Rule, and made her the instrument of Re-establishing Religious Discipline, particularly the Spirit of Prayer, amongst Us in its greatest Vigour, so that I have heard some in our Community Say, She might be justly styled our Second Foundress. I have begun this upon Good Friday in honour of the Suffering of my Divine Redeemer, hoping through the merits of the same, and the intercession of his most Blessed Mother, that Almighty God will direct me to put down what shall be most for His Honour and Glory, and the Instruction and Benefit of those who shall read this manuscript. Resolving to confide entirely in the infinite goodness of God, who frequently makes Use of Weak Instruments to show his power. As also animated by Calling to mind what I have so often heard this our most Dear Mother repeat out of one of the works of St. Francis Sales, *viz.*, that Almighty God would sooner work a miracle in order to render a person Capable to perform what He, by the Voice of their Superiors demands of them, than that they should fail therein, provided that they endeavour to do their part. I therefore put my trust in Him that He will afford me the means to acquire a Sufficient Knowledge of her Virtues, and Chiefly of that true Interior Spirit of a Religious of the Holy Sepulchre with which She was animated in all her Actions, which is what I most ardently wish to do, that so we may be encouraged to Imitate Virtues which rendered her so agreeable in the Eyes of her heavenly Spouse, and by which she arrived at so Eminent a degree of Perfection.

Mary Dennett was born on September 12th, 1730, at the village of Appleton in the parish of Widness, near Warrington in Lancashire. She was the youngest of the four children of Henry Dennett and Mary Harrison. At the time of the marriage he was a Protestant, and she a Catholic. He promised to embrace the Faith after the marriage, but instead of this, he succeeded in perverting her. Mr. Henry Dennett died when his daughter Mary was very young. Mrs. Dennett returned to the true Faith after living as an inveterate Protestant for ten years, and she became an exemplary Catholic full of piety and virtue, and she brought up her children with the same spirit of faith which she possessed herself. Her eldest daughter, Helen, entered our convent at Liége in 1742, and was professed on April 7th, 1744,

at the age of nineteen. Mary longed to follow her example, and she made a vow of chastity when only twelve years of age. Even then she spent much time in prayer and in reading the Lives of the Saints. Her mother loved her more than her other children, and kept as relics certain pious pictures which the child had cleverly embellished with finely cut paper. Some of these are still preserved as heirlooms in her family. They are quite little works of art. Mrs. Dennett offered no opposition to her daughter's vocation, and she entered the convent at Liège in September, 1746, though she afterwards owned that the parting with her mother had appeared to offer an insurmountable obstacle to her vocation. She did not take the first habit until May 14th, 1747, as it was advisable to send her to a convent in the town to complete her education. She only stayed there for three months, but after receiving the first habit she was sent to an Ursuline convent for the same purpose. She spent six months there, and the nuns were charmed with her, and used to call her a saint and an angel. She was not clothed until September 16th, 1748. It is a lamentable fact that Mother Joseph Smith has not told us the name of the novice mistress, though she calls her a "ferverous good religious," and tells us that she foresaw that Sister Christina would one day be a great servant of God, because of the unusually fervent dispositions she noticed in her. She was professed on October 26th, 1749, and it is interesting to find that she was the first nun to take the Sacred Heart for her title. One quality that was especially observable in her from the first, was her great diligence in improving herself so as to become useful to the community. A remarkable instance is given of this. She was sixteen years of age before she began to learn music, for which she had neither taste nor ear, and then she was set to learn the "harpsichord," and by dint of exertion extended to every spare moment she succeeded so well, that after a time she was ordered to learn the organ, with a result that justified the foresight of the Superior, Mother Xaveria Withenbury, herself a very good musician.

At first [the memoir says] the choir sang in one tone, and she played in another, . . . however, this did not discourage her, and notwithstanding the great difficulties she found, she persevered, and joined prayer to her great application, most earnestly and frequently entreating Almighty God to bless her endeavours, and it pleased Him to grant the petition of this, His faithful Spouse, for after some time she became a Charming Organist; and Persons who were judges and heard her, said she played most delightfully, and had quite a Masterly finger, she also acquired so nice an Ear, that she perceived the least fault which the Choir Committed.

She was very fond of reading spiritual books, and of conversing on spiritual subjects, especially with one of the nuns who was a person of prayer and full of the love of God, but Mother Joseph does not gratify us by letting us know who this was. Sister Christina was always most grateful to this good soul, and in after years she used to say, that it was she who taught her to enter seriously into herself, and to understand the interior spirit of the Rule. This was probably after she left the Noviceship, and certainly some time after her profession. She began to pray earnestly that God would send her a guide in the paths of perfection. While she was *tourière*, Father Howard, S.J., began to visit an acquaintance in the convent, and when Sister Christina let him in he frequently said to her, "Shall I never see a Teresa here?" She thought this very odd, and told the nuns she could not conceive what he meant.

This was the person whom Divine Providence had destined to Direct and Instruct her in the practices of an Interior Life, and to help and assist her in all her undertakings. . . . She was in a short time much advanced in perfection, so as to be prepared to Execute the great designs Almighty God had over her, she being the Person he had chosen to promote his glory by raising in his Holy Sepulchre Religious discipline, and the Spirit of prayer according to the perfection of its Institute. Her holy director on his side spared no pains to help her, and frequently came to see her. He was made Extraordinary some time after, and in March 1764 was Chosen our Director. She said during her last Illness, that after God she owed all to him as the chief Instrument of her Sanctification. She found herself much drawn to Extraordinary Mortifications, as fasting, Disciplines and other Corporal austerities, which Divine Impulse she faithfully complied with. Her mortifications were excessive, and her disciplines so severe that her linen was covered with blood, which the Nun who was then *lingere* perceiving spoke to the Superior of it, who told her that she was a holy soul, and had permission for what she did. . . . She always had a great Devotion to the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, and as soon as she began to give herself to an Interior Life, she made use of the privilege the Constitutions give, and which was already practised by some few in the Community of giving particular Days to Communion besides those appointed by the Rule. She increased the number of her Communions by degrees, and after some time approached the holy Table Daily, and it was in this divine Sacrament she found her greatest Comfort and Consolation, and drew chiefly from it those extraordinary graces Necessary to withstand the great trials she was to undergo.

She endured much from the attacks of the devil, and these were not interior only. Once when as *tourière* she opened the back door to let in a horse laden with corn, it became furious, and there seemed no escape for her

except through the enclosure door. This she was determined not to pass. She afterwards owned that she had been much frightened not by the horse, but by the rider, and she never knew how she remained unhurt. Another time the devil flung her down the cellar stairs, and she sprained her ankle. A greater trial was that her fasts and abstinence, and the frequency of her Communion were blamed as singularities by some members of the community. The following account of what occurred is copied from an incomplete but original manuscript belonging to Stonyhurst College :

This evil, for anything of the kind must be considered as such in a religious community, seems to have originated in great measure from the then actual situation of the convent with regard to its direction in spiritual concerns : a variety of Directors differing in their ways of thinking and manner of acting, (and perhaps under the influence of personal prejudice) could not fail to produce some kind of partiality in those who were attached to them, and prepare the way to censure and division whenever the enemy of mankind should find a circumstance favourable to his purpose. In whatever point of view Mother Christina's conduct was viewed by some members of the community, it is certain that she was held in universal esteem, and was much respected. There was something so visibly extraordinary, so regular, and so virtuous in her deportment, that the most prejudiced could not refuse this tribute. These appearances however, were much inferior to the reality. Her prayer at this time, seems to have been an habitual state of union with God, and accompanied with such extraordinary gifts and supernatural illustrations, that her Director, a man of eminent virtue, learning and experience judged it proper to correspond with the call of Almighty God, by indulging her with the liberty of approaching more frequently to the source of all perfection in the B. Sacrament of the Altar. This permission, tho' warranted by experience, in the present case by the sanction and judgment of an able Director, by the example of so many holy persons in all ages, and by the general sense of the Church, was one of the great causes of a persecution which Mother Christina underwent. . . The imprudence of two or more persons concerned in the direction of different members increased the evil. Complaints were carried to the Grand Vicar Superior of the convent, . . . who came in person to examine the merits of the case. But so far from being displeased with her, who was invidiously represented as the object and cause of the complaint ; he was charmed with her behaviour, and satisfied with what he observed in her. However, to remove any further source of disturbance with regard to the point in question, he was pleased to ordain that all the Religious *might* communicate three times a week, besides the appointments of the Rule.

True virtue is never more visible and evident than when it is exposed to contradiction, and placed under the cloud of humiliation. This remark was fully verified in Mother Christina during the whole course of this proceeding. Whether those who interdicted the use of Communion as frequently as she had been indulged with it before, have (*sic*) power to do so beyond a limited period, and as

a trial, is a question which we need not handle in this place. Her behaviour on the occasion was a picture of the most consummate obedience; not a word of complaint, either with respect to the thing itself, or the persons who had been most active against her.

So Mother Christina was deprived for a time at least of daily Communion. This was a heavy trial, but it was sweetened by the knowledge that in future more frequent Communion would be practised by the rest of the community. She was ill in the infirmary when the Superior's decision was sent to the convent, and the Prioress was also confined to her room by illness she therefore sent one of the nuns to inform Mother Christina of the prohibition. She received it like a saint, and only replied: "God's holy will be done." So this painful episode ended. The accounts of it are written so as to conceal names. The tradition in the community is that among the ecclesiastics who directed the nuns were one or two who were tainted with the spirit of Jansenism, which was so rampant at the time. These do not seem ever to have been officially connected with the house, as confessors by appointment of ecclesiastical Superiors, but of individual nuns by permission only. It was this contact with the spirit of Jansenism that made Mother Christina so anxious to secure the direction of the Jesuit Fathers for her nuns.

In 1761 she was appointed second mistress of the school, and in April, 1762, she was elected Procuratrix. She was quite untrained to business, and was at first much oppressed with this employment.

But she acted under this Cross in humble Silence, Patience and Resignation, so as to animate others who laboured under the like Trials of being placed in Offices they thought themselves unqualified for; to try to imitate her Example. . . . It is incredible the pains she took to perfect herself in her Employment notwithstanding she found many difficulties; but by prayer and constant application, she soon acquired a perfect knowledge of all that concerned her Office, so that she rendered great service to the Community, and she had much to Suffer from different Causes, especially from the Circumstances of the House which were then very low. Her Exterior Comportment was admirable; go when you pleased to her, tho' in the midst of business and temporal affairs which were annexed to her charge, she never showed the least sign of displeasure or impatience. . . . But this is not to be wondered at, as I have understood that God acted in her at that time in an extraordinary manner, so that she was enabled by his divine Grace to join the active and contemplative life in an extraordinary manner. . . . Her five years being expired in the Office of Procuratrix during which she received many Extraordinary and Sublime favours from Almighty God, she was made Mistress of Novices in the month of April 1767. There were at that time about ten or twelve in the Noviceship.

It is easy to find the names of more than twelve choir novices who were under Mother Christina, but they were not all in the Noviceship when she was first made Mistress. They were, Sister Jane Regis Hagan from Maryland, Sister Magdalen Champney, Sister Mary Stanislaus Berington, Sister Mary Austin Westby, who afterwards succeeded Mother Christina as Prioress, the four sisters Semmes from Maryland, only two of whom lived to be professed. Their Christian names were Mary Anne, Martha, Clare, and Teresa. Their religious names were Constantia, Mary Rose, Ursula, and Francis Regis. Sister Mary Rose (Martha) was professed on April 19th, 1768, and died on December 30th, the same year. Sister Mary Ursula lived to be Mistress of Novices at New Hall. The two cherished children of Mother Christina, Catherine and Charlotte Stourton, were received into the Noviceship on May 25th, 1767, that is, only about a month after she was made Mistress; Sister Aloysia Joseph Wright about a week later; and Sister Mary Joseph Smith, and Sister Ann Xaveria Webbe came in the June and August following. Sister Ann Teresa Askin died while still a novice, August 20th, 1767. Sister Constantia Roper and Sister Longina Hagan made the first part of their noviceship under Mother Christina, but they were not professed until after she was made Prioress. Mother Mary Joseph enters fully on Mother Christina's method of dealing with her novices, and on her most practical instructions to them.

This is the most convenient place for inserting what we know of Catherine and Charlotte Stourton, Sister Mary Agatha and Sister Mary Anne, both of the Immaculate Conception. They were nieces of Mother Angela and Mother Mary Sales Stourton, and the only daughters of William, 15th Lord Stourton, and his wife, Winefred Howard of Norfolk. This Lord Stourton was a great benefactor to the community, and was on terms of intimate spiritual friendship with Mother Christina. He not only allowed his two daughters to follow their vocation to the Holy Sepulchre, but to mark the joy with which he gave them to God, he himself led them to the altar and communicated between them within the sanctuary-rails at their clothing, on November 21st, 1767, Sister Mary Agatha being seventeen, and Sister Mary Anne sixteen years of age. The ceremony was remembered as a very brilliant one. The brides wore dresses of very rich silk, made by special order at Lyons. The ground was white crossed with gold thread, and the brocaded pattern was very gorgeous. They were made into a complete Mass set for three priests, and a cope and Benediction veil besides. They were in use for more than a hundred years. It may amuse the reader

to know that Lord Stourton himself wore a crimson velvet suit. The great height of both father and daughters added to the general effect of the scene.

An account of a vision with which Mother Christina was favoured when these two young ladies were kneeling in the chapter-room for their first admission to the noviciate in the handwriting of the pious nobleman is preserved, together with his hair-shirt, disciplines, and some other objects of piety, as family relics by his descendants. "When the two Misses S.S. were on their knees in the chapter after their admission, I saw two crowns or garlands of beautiful flowers placed on their heads by the Queen of Heaven, and I understood that these were given for the present, but that later, at their Profession as it seemed to me, that is at the completion of their sacrifice, they were to have crowns of gold richly adorned and much larger. I saw that their entrance into religion was most pleasing to the Mother of God, and understood the great favour God did them in giving them this call and the means to follow it before they could be brought forward in the world." A hiatus here occurs in the manuscript; after a few lines we read as follows. "I much desired to have these angelic children of ours put in the way of becoming what God calls them to. I can't express how carefully St. Francis Xavier guards them: he holds them in his arms, and seems resolved never to let them go from him. He draws them from the world, and will not suffer them so much as to touch it, much less go into it and learn its vanities. I saw some degree of the humility which Our Lady felt at the Annunciation granted to A. which is an immense favour."

In the same writing there is a fragment of another vision relating to the same young ladies.

"I beheld our Divine Lord present when the two Miss SS received the habit; I presented them both to Him, He received each of them apart under His special protection, in the way He did the rest, viz. to be Himself their master of novices, so that their mistress has nothing more to do, than to tell them, as she does the rest, what He dictates to her. Whenever I recommend them to Him, His breast is open, His divine Heart appears all inflamed; the divine eyes dart forth sparks, as it were, of fire. All denotes the love and tender affection which He feels for these His spouses. Our dear Lady was also present, and received them both anew under her protection. When I offered them to her, she cast a most motherly look on these innocent souls."¹

Sister Mary Agatha was never professed. She died September 2nd, 1768. Let us hope that she then obtained her golden crown. Sister Mary Anne died on November 2nd, 1775, at the early age of twenty-four. It is said that there was something angelic both in the appearance and the character of these two sisters.

¹ From Mother Magdalen Sales' MS.

Mother Christina was elected Subprioress at Easter, 1769, and in March, 1770, she was made Prioress.

She was much oppressed with the weight of so great a Charge which proceeded from the knowledge Almighty God had communicated to her on the duties of Superiority, insomuch that She would not have taken upon her this burden, had she not been animated and supported by the Virtue of Obedience to submit thereunto. . . . She began the reform which Almighty God had destined she should make in his holy Sepulchre with a heart inflamed with divine love such as the following of Christ describes Chapter the 5th, Book the 3rd, where he says Love flies, runs and rejoices, &c. Such was the State and the Disposition of this thrice happy Spouse of the Celestial King of Heaven which spirit of the love of God she did her utmost to communicate to those under her charge. She raised religious discipline amongst us to a most flourishing state and Instructed Us with indefatigable pains and labour how to animate all our Exterior Duties by the Spirit of prayer. She began with much ardour to instil the Spirit of our Sacred Vows (of which God gave her a very extensive knowledge, insomuch that had her power been as great as her zeal, she would have made us all true imitators of her Heavenly Spouse Jesus Christ Crucified with this epitaph: "Here lies She that dead to all things lives to God alone." . . . She looked on a Religious State as a Terrestrial Paradise, in consequence of which she neglected no means to make us fit to enjoy so great a blessing by trying to extirpate from our hearts all self-indulgence by the practice of Interior Mortification such as the true Spirit of Poverty teaches us, on which Point she was very Ingenious to Exercise us as divine Love excited her to do, for it is severe on self-seeking as the holy Gospel teaches. She was admirable with respect to her Conduct in trying to empty the Soul of all Self-esteem and Self Complacency in the Exercise of exterior functions. She also endeavoured to stifle all Self will by exercising us in the true Spirit of Obedience, which She Strove with great Constancy and resolution to Effectuate by the different ways which the Spirit of God inspires to such Generous Souls as She truly was. This Duty she performed towards her Religious to the last Period of her happy Life, and so great was her Zeal and Thirst for our Spiritual Advancement, that though She ardently Sighed after the enjoyment of God, yet was She willing to have remained much longer here below, if thereby She could have rendered us more pleasing in the sight of God. . . .

So Mother Joseph goes on for pages and pages, showing how Reverend Mother Christina was, from the first, continually inciting her Religious to the utmost fidelity in the observance of their Rules and vows; her instructions are such as we should expect to be given to a very fervent community, and the reader will wonder where the need of reform came in. It was in the matter of holy poverty. For some time previously, and perhaps from the beginning of the convent, the nuns' pensions, or part of them, were at

the disposal of individual nuns, subject of course to the permission of Superiors. This was a very common practice in Belgium at that time. All that Mother Joseph tells us of it is that the pensions were put in common, "so that the Superior provides for each person in the manner she judges proper, by which means Poverty is kept up in its Vigour, and a true Spirit of Dependence on Superiors such as we ought to have. It also helps much to maintain the spirit of union and fraternal charity amongst us, and prevents many faults." We have no proof that she met with much opposition in this matter. The enlargement and improvement of the school seems to have cost her more. It had hitherto been extremely small, seldom numbering more than five or six, but Mother Christina was full of zeal for the glory of God, which she thought could not be better promoted than by the instruction of children.

She set her heart on giving Catholic girls the same advantages which they would have in the great schools in England. This being in no shape incompatible with the Exercise of Virtue, but on the contrary quite conformable to the same, as it often happens that virtue is held in Contempt by worldly persons for want of these accomplishments, and it is much to be feared that many would prefer a place where their children might have the means of Improving their Natural abilities or talents, and acquiring those accomplishments necessary to render them Pleasing in the Eyes of the world, to a Convent where they could possess every advantage for their Improvement in Virtue and Piety, and be well instructed in our holy religion, and taught what is necessary, though deprived of many advantages which others possess.

But this is not the whole account of the enlargement of the school. We know from other sources that these enlightened views did not prevent her from dreading lest the increase of exterior work should entail a loss of the spirit of recollection and prayer in the community, and the interference with spiritual duties. Father Howard strongly urged her to proceed, and when she still held back, he told her to pray about it. She prayed earnestly, and then she was enlightened by God to see that the enlarging of the school would be for His glory. She told Father Howard she was convinced, and in spite of the obstacles she met with from the poverty of the community, and the dread that many felt of the great trouble that must be incurred, the work was begun. Mother Joseph continues :

But our Dear Mother neither seemed to see nor fear any Difficulty where the Glory of God was interested, and would say, when She met with any opposition, that this was a proof of its being Right, and for the honour of God, for the Enemy

always raises difficulties on these occasions, in order to prevent the Execution of our pious designs. In a very short time a spacious school was built, the number of pupils rose to over forty, well qualified members came, and these she provided with necessary means for improving their talents.

A new building was begun in July, 1772, and probably the school began to increase at once, but we have no proof that the increase was very great before 1775. Then applications became so numerous that in February, 1776, another building was commenced, and the two together made a very fine school. Mother Christina always took the keenest interest in the school, and required an exact account of all that occurred there. She was very attentive to see that the mistresses did their duty, and inquired into the progress of each individual child, and the children on their side looked upon her as a saint.

Mother Magdalen Sales tells us in the following words how our community came to possess a very precious privilege :

Like all great saints, this holy woman had a high veneration for the various Religious Orders established by God in His Church ; she loved and esteemed her vocation as the most precious of Heaven's best gifts, and though she revered her own order with the same ardent affection as a dutiful child would testify towards a most tender mother, this did not prevent her from appreciating each Institute according to its high deserts ; the Society of Jesus, especially, was held by her in singular veneration, as it had ever been by her predecessors from the first foundation of the convent. In 1771, the venerable Father Laurence Ricci, eighteenth General of the Society, at the solicitation of Father Howard, and of William Lord Stourton, privately issued a deed of affiliation, entitling the Prioress and Community of the English Sepulchres of Liege to a participation in all the merits, prayers, and Sacrifices of the Society. This valuable and much esteemed grant was framed and suspended in the chapter-room, and it now hangs in the work-room at New Hall.

We give the following translation of the deed of affiliation :

I. H. S.

Laurence Ricci, General of the Society of Jesus, to the very Reverend and beloved daughter in Christ, Mary Christina Dennett, Prioress of the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre, in the suburbs of the city of Liege, and to all the Religious now living in the same convent, everlasting happiness in the Lord.

Such is the virtue and piety of your Reverence and Community, and so great your good will and acknowledged services to our Society, as justly to entitle you to any return we can make to you in the Lord. Therefore, as we cannot make known these our sentiments by any other means than by offering you spiritual helps ; by

the authority which the Lord has bestowed on us (however unworthy) in this our Society; we make you partakers of all and each of the Sacrifices, prayers, fasts, and other good works and pious exercises of body and mind, which are, by the grace of God, performed throughout all of this, our smallest Society: and, with all the affection of our heart, in Christ Jesus, we grant to you a full communication in them, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Moreover, we supplicate God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His mercy, to ratify and confirm from Heaven this concession: and supplying for our deficiencies from the inexhaustible treasury of the merits of His Divine Son, may He be pleased to grant to your Reverence and your Community, abundance of all grace and blessings in this life, and reward you with a crown of eternal glory in the next.

Given at Rome this 13th day of May, 1771.

The holy Prioress had shortly afterwards the affliction of witnessing the triumph of irreligion in the suppression of that illustrious Order.

The reader will scarcely need to be reminded that the irreligious element in all the Catholic countries of Europe had long been working to obtain this result. The unscrupulous Ministers of the King of Portugal, and of the Bourbon Sovereigns of France, Spain, Naples, and Parma, had urged on their masters to decree their expulsion from those States, but this was not enough, and at length, by threats and violence, they obtained from Pope Clement XIV. the Brief of Suppression, dated July 21st, 1773.

Mgr. de Welbruck, the Prince Bishop of Liège, was an independent ruler, and being a devoted friend of the Society of Jesus, he invited the English Fathers from the various Colleges to Belgium, to undertake the work of the education of youth in the College at Liège, which had hitherto been a theologate where future missionaries went through their studies. This work was continued, while masters and scholars from Bruges flocked to the refuge thus opened to them, which at once became a very flourishing establishment. The Prince Bishop befriended it in every way. He formally opened it under the name of the Anglo-Bavarian Academy, and left the entire control of it to the Fathers, who agreed among themselves to continue their former mode of life, and Mother Christina's holy director, Father John Howard, the late Rector, was made President. The Prince Bishop afterwards obtained from Pius VI. a brief of confirmation for the institute thus formed. The following letter was sent by Reverend Mother Christina to Mgr. Welbruck:

My Lord,—The Prioress and Community of the English Sepulchrines, having heard of the melancholy situation of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, are in the greatest affliction. We humbly address ourselves to your Highness, imploring

your paternal protection, begging that you will permit them to continue to hear our confessions with the privileges granted us by your Highness and predecessors. We have always received the Sacraments from these Fathers, without regard to the title of Ordinary or Extraordinary. We settled in this town from no other motive than to be under their direction. It is on this account our house has been constantly furnished with members. The English families who send us their children for education, do it on no other account, but to place them under their direction. Our peace and union depend on their being continued. Forty-one of our Religious confess constantly to Father Howard, as also our Pensioners. It would be hard, my Lord, to refuse us this liberty so necessary for our spiritual and temporal succour, since it is by these Fathers our house subsists and is conserved. In fine, we earnestly entreat your Highness to confirm the above-mentioned privileges, since our only confidence is in those Fathers. We more securely confide in your Highness's granting our request, having so often heard the Rector of the English College speak of your goodness.¹

No wonder they obtained their request. Father Howard continued to guide them until his holy death, October 16th, 1783. He resided in the College, but had rooms in the out-quarters of the convent, where he spent a good deal of time, and where he died.

It was at this time that Father Howard burnt a large number of documents written by Mother Christina, giving details of many extraordinary favours bestowed upon her by God. He afterwards regretted his precipitation. It has been considered certain that among these papers was more than one communication foretelling the resuscitation of the Society. In one of the manuscript copies of Reverend Mother Christina's Memoir, we find the following :

It is a tradition in our House, though the documents which might have proved it have unfortunately perished, that Reverend Mother Christina was favoured and comforted in her affliction for the suppression of the Society of Jesus by a foreknowledge of its Restoration. It is said that one day, when pouring forth her soul in prayer at the foot of her Crucifix, the image bowed its head three times to her, and she was given to understand that after three tens of years the Society would be raised up again.

If this occurred shortly before her death, in 1781, it would be sufficiently correct of the restoration of the Society in 1814, but if it took place in 1773, it might refer to one of the partial restorations, as to that of 1804.

In the month of June, 1780, Reverend Mother Christina had a slight

¹ This letter must, of course, have been translated into French. The original from which this is copied is probably the rough copy written by Reverend Mother Christina herself.

attack of paralysis, which only kept her from regularity for a few days, but in the middle of the following Lent she became so weak and ill as to be confined to her room.

Mother Mechtildis Meade was at that time affected with an extinction of voice to which she was subject generally once or twice a year, and sometimes for two months together. She was appointed to remain near the person of our dear declining Superior, and she looked upon this as a most special favour conferred on her by Almighty God; she attributed her cure to Mother Christina's prayers, for she perfectly recovered before her death, and never had any return of her complaint, though previously she had been subject to it all her life.

To counterbalance these favours, Mother Mechtildis had from the first a painful conviction that Mother Christina had a foreknowledge of her approaching death, for she opened a cupboard in which she kept her instruments of penance, and desired Mother Mechtildis to put them away secretly, and a few days later she burned all her spiritual memoranda, and expressed the greatest joy when this was done.

But to us [Mother Mary Joseph continues] the destruction of these memoranda is, and must be, a source of great regret, depriving us as no doubt it did of many holy instructions, and many subjects of edification, as well as of the knowledge of many spiritual favours conferred on her by Almighty God.

This was the second burning of Mother Christina's papers, the first was of those which were in the hands of Father Howard at the time of the suppression, as related before. Tradition tells us that many still remained, and were burned at a later date by the Superior into whose hands Father Clifton's papers fell after his death. The wonder is that any escaped.

The account of Reverend Mother Christina's death must be given in Mother Joseph's words :

She frequently spoke of the Immense benefit of a Religious Vocation, and of the vanity of all the things of this world. She was sometimes a little better, so as to be able to go about; but these intervals never lasted long, and she grew daily weaker, but trained on till the month of July. It seemed as if Almighty God prolonged her life that she might give us an example of the most heroic virtues no less than she had done during health. Also that we might resign ourselves by degrees against the time when it should please Him to Call this His most faithful Spouse, and our most Dear Mother to receive the reward of her Virtues and Labours. As she grew considerably worse she received the last Sacraments, and upon the 11th of July fell into her agony, continued in it all that Day and the following Night, and suffered very much the next morning. Before the Community

Mass, Mr. Howard came in to her. She made her Confession, after which she returned him thanks for all he had done for her, and seemed to take leave of him as if she knew she should not be able to speak to him any more. He left her to say Mass, and when he returned she was speechless, and expired about a Quarter before ten o'clock on the 12th of July, in the year 1781, in the morning, in the fifty-first year of her age, and the thirty-third of her religious profession. We lost in her a perfect model of our holy state, a Saint, the best of Superiors, and most tender of parents. We admired to see the goodness of God to this our most happy community, for though she was most truly Beloved and Esteemed by each of us, and we were much oppressed with Grief, and truly sensible of the Great Loss we sustained, yet we were all in a state of great peace, and in humble silent suffering, which was to us an evident Proof of her Extraordinary Virtue, and how pleasing she was to God, as we doubt not but this was an Effect of her Prayers, and that she interceded much for Us at the throne of God, so that many of us were much astonished at the powerful Effects of Divine Grace which it seemed to produce in a wonderful manner in each Individual, so that her happy Death resembled that of Blessed St. Ignatius—for which favour we esteem ourselves indebted to God by means of her great merits and Virtues, which we humbly beseech His Divine Majesty to make us partakers of by inheriting truly her Spirit here, and hereafter to enjoy God with her in Heaven, a blessing we most humbly beg of God.

It is not possible here to enter into details of Reverend Mother Christina's virtues or to give any examples of her instructions to her nuns, though Mother Joseph dwells at great length on both these subjects and they are most precious to us. She is said to have left the community in a state almost as perfect as could be conceived in this life. The nuns were all of one heart and one soul, the Rules fervently observed and the spirit of prayer of a very high order indeed. The temporal affairs of the house were also good, the community was large and the school very large and flourishing. A great deal of this good result has always been attributed to the great devotion to the Sacred Heart, which the nuns imbibed from their saintly Superior and also from Father Howard, S.J. It would be very interesting to trace the history of this devotion in the community from the beginning. It must of course have been known through the Jesuit Fathers at an earlier date than this, but the devotion was very specially opposed at Liège from a strange suspicion that it was in some way a hindrance to devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and the feast of the Sacred Heart was looked upon by many as a rival feast to that of Corpus Christi, which was celebrated with the utmost pomp at Liège, the home of Blessed Juliana. But Mother Christina obtained permission for the feast to be celebrated in the convent as a *duplex majus* in 1767.¹ She was

¹ Mother Xaveria Withenbury was then Prioress, but it was through the influence of Mother Christina that the grant was obtained.

favoured with several supernatural illustrations bearing reference to this Divine Heart. They are too long for insertion, but a few fragments of them must be given. The paper is headed, "An intellectual vision relating to the Sacred Heart."

1766. Yesterday the feast of your Sacred Heart was celebrated in Heaven. I saw this divine Heart displayed, and as it were, exposed to all. . . . In this divine Heart was seen by the Angels and Saints all that immense sea or ocean of all good. The attributes of God were seen in it. I saw the angels in adoration and great jubilee contemplating this divine treasure. I saw in some degree the accidental glory which they received from the Incarnation, and which came to them by means of this divine Heart. . . . My dear Lord gave a general Pardon by way of a Plenary Indulgence to all who assisted at this feast on earth . . . and he was much pleased with its being celebrated, but it appeared to me it ought to be universal and made a day of prayer and not of work. This I saw would be more pleasing to our Dear Redeemer. Since you are as I may say, in all places dishonoured in the Blessed Sacrament, so you would have a universal Reparation, I mean in all places by means of this feast, wherever you are on the altar. O Divine Heart! how am I enamoured of you. O that all your Creatures saw you as I do, and the treasures in you which you are full of. . . . You seemed to bestow these indulgences and graces to excite and encourage the devotion, which was not solemnized on earth in that universal way it was in Heaven *on the same Day*. This seemed to cause a grief in my dear Lord as it appeared to me; and in the same proportion as I was made sensible of it; I also grieved for the same. I saw my dear Lord was satisfied with the manner after which the book of His Sacred Heart mentions its being celebrated, but He was not so with regard to its being celebrated in some places only.

The following fragments are from another vision on the same subject.

O divine Heart! I am bid to mention what I see of it. Who can describe the Heart of God Man? . . . You are high on a throne of glory, all glorious on the right hand of the Eternal Father. You manifest yourself to me in this place, where I have likewise seen You at other times when I applied to You in behalf of certain persons; but particularly when I pray for the Souls in Purgatory. I also see you help them at my Intercession, and draw them out by applying your sacred merits. I saw You on this high throne when I prayed for the propagation of this solid, profound and great devotion. I understood that you were much pleased with this devotion and my prayer. Your divine Eyes seemed to sparkle with rays of glory and brightness, Your divine hands held your sacred breast open for me to see more clearly into this rich Treasure. This sight made me become lost as I may say, and drowned in the Sentiments of this divine Heart much in the same way as I have seen the angels become as it were lost in astonishment when at the altar they adore You hid under the veil of bread in the Sacred

Host. To admire and contemplate this divine Heart which I saw and still see without seeing, is more than sufficient to employ a whole eternity; as the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament is to the angels.

From Mother Christina's time the feast of the Sacred Heart has always been kept by the community on the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi, and as a day of rest, with Exposition all day, singing Mass and an act of public reparation and other devotions. From her time, too, date many of the practices of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Sacred Heart of Mary that are established among us. In 1771 her friend, William Lord Stourton, gave her an altar of the Sacred Heart for the cloister. This was probably the first erected in the convent. The devotion increased more and more, so that at the time of the departure for England the nuns were, so to speak, all fire and flames for it.

Mother Christina had an intense devotion to our Blessed Lady, and also to St. Joseph, as the patron of an interior life, on which account she used to tell her nuns that he ought to be especially dear to Sepulchrines, whose vocation it is to live "hidden with Christ in God." The following fragment has been copied from a manuscript in the handwriting of the holy Prioress, preserved at Stonyhurst.

Jan. 17, 1771. Visiting the little chapel of the Ave-roi, and begging some favour of St. Joseph, I seemed to see him in glory, with a consciousness that his place in heaven is near the most Blessed Trinity. It seemed to me that he was teaching me how to imitate him in being interior, and in leading an interior life: methought he impetrated the Blessed Trinity for me, and that he took me in a special manner under his protection; but he insisted much on my leading an interior life.

She also had a great devotion to St. Michael, St. John Baptist, and St. Ignatius, but by far the most characteristic of her devotions to the saints was that which she bore to St. Francis Xavier. In her last illness she told Mother Joseph that it was through his intercession that she had received most of the extraordinary graces and favours that God had given her.

No one has ever doubted the truth of the tradition that one day when she was favoured with his sensible presence, and was earnestly beseeching him to be present with her, and to assist her at the hour of her death, he granted her request not only for herself, but for all present and future members of the community, a precious promise for all whom it concerns. From the manuscript quoted above we have the following:

1770. On the eve of St. Francis Xavier, my soul *saw* or *knew* what follows. A cloud seemed to interpose between my soul and some heavenly object of whose presence my soul was certain, only that it was obscured by this cloud. I beheld dimly through the cloud some Jesuits on their knees as if in prayer; all this lasted for about half an hour or more, till the end of recreation, when I went to the church to make my visit as usual. Then the cloud opened, and St. Francis Xavier appeared in all his glory—like an immense column of glory—brighter than the sun, and imperiously majestic. O my soul! truly thou wantest words to describe his glory; and still further does it exult in seeing the care Thou hast of *us* who place our hopes in thee! *Thou wast even then praying for us* when I beheld thee in thy glory. My soul received on this occasion—and O great Saint, no doubt it was through thy intercession—a great zeal for the glory of our dear Lord, and for the conversion and perfection of souls. This impression remains as yet, January 9th, 1771.

Mother Joseph has inserted in her memoir the following testimony of Father Hermann Kemper to the supernatural character of Mother Christina's communications with God.

In confirmation of the intimate communication which Reverend Mother Christina Dennett enjoyed with God in prayer, and of the extraordinary lights with which she was favoured by Him may be added the following account of which I can attest the truth. Father Edward Brown of our Society, and my fellow Novice honoured me with his confidence, and amongst other secrets concerning himself disclosed to me some of the circumstances of his vocation to a religious life. He had received a pious education in the Jesuits' College at Arras, and even then had a desire of entering into the Society, but his father recalled him and employed him in his temporal concerns. In the world he soon lost his first fervour, and was led by degrees into an idle, dissipated course of life. At last some unfortunate accidents made him enter into himself, and rekindled in his breast the desire of leading a life conformable to the maxims of the Gospel. He put himself under the direction of Rev. Mr. Talbot in London, who having discovered his interior dispositions, referred him to the Rev. Fr. Howard at Liege for further instruction. After he had been for some time under his guidance, he (Fr. Howard) put into his hands a paper (which Mr. Brown kept by him and gave me to read), telling him at the same time from whom it came, viz., Mother Christina, and that he was frequently helped, by lights received that way, to learn the will of God with regard to persons under his care. Mr. Brown told me he was rather surprised at such a declaration, however he read the paper in which was written thus: "When I had betaken myself to prayer for the person in whose behalf I was ordered to present my petition to Heaven, our Saviour appeared to me with a Cross, seemingly in a suffering state. I also saw that person praying at the same time for lights to be directed in the choice of a state of life.

Our Saviour told me His good pleasure was that the young man should enter into His Society, but that He would not force him. I understood from the condition in which I saw our Saviour that he was to sanctify himself and glorify God by his sufferings." This, Mr. Brown assured me, encouraged him, particularly as he remembered that at the time marked he had really prayed for the grace mentioned in the note; and as he had many other motives sufficient to determine him, he embraced the religious state. He lived not quite four years in the Society,¹ and I can affirm from certain knowledge that during the whole time he suffered cruelly from constant bodily infirmities, especially most violent head-aches, from interior trials, from a marked dislike of some of his companions for him, even from dispositions of superiors in his regard. As he had very sensible feelings he suffered much from these causes, but with great patience and silent meekness. Some days after his death, which took place the 7th of December, I think about 2 o'clock in the morning, happening to mention him to Fr. William Mercer, he spoke to me these precise words in a positive manner. "He remained in Purgatory during the day and night after his death, and in the morning of the feast of the Immaculate Conception of our Lady, went to Heaven." As Fr. Mercer was the great confidant of Fr. Howard, I make no doubt but that this intelligence was derived from the same source, and I was confirmed in the belief of it from what I had felt, for fearing lest his partiality for me might be the cause of his suffering in Purgatory, I felt a most heavy sadness hanging upon me during the whole day after his death, and found myself constantly moved to pray and mortify myself for the repose of his soul, but all vanished entirely on the following day, and I never after experienced the least uneasiness about his happiness in Heaven. I asked him once whether Mother Christina continued to be favoured with extraordinary graces. His answer was: "She is now raised to a higher degree of prayer, seeing things no longer by sensible figures, but beholding the sublimest truths in intellectual visions. She suffers immensely from souls in Purgatory permitted by God to expose their sufferings to her, and to implore her intercession for them." After Fr. Brown's death I remember Fr. Howard went into his room to look for papers which, he said, belonged to himself. He took them, and I suppose destroyed them with other papers. For my part I can truly assert that not only the knowledge of these things, but much more Mother Christina's angelic appearance when I had the happiness to see her, impressed my mind with a reverential awe for her, as for a saint, and I can never recal the remembrance of her in any other light.

H. KEMPER.

Unfortunately no good likeness of Reverend Mother Christina has been preserved. The sketches of her made by the nuns were probably done from memory after her death, and they certainly represent an attractive

¹ Four years after Profession, but six from his entrance into the Novitiate in 1764. He died, December 7th, 1770.

countenance. She is said to have been remarkably handsome. Mother Joseph writes:

I have heard many Persons of Distinction as well as others say they had never seen so fine a woman in their lives, nor one who seemed to be endowed with so many Extraordinary Qualifications both of body and mind. . . . Persons have said that they should have supposed she had been brought up in a Court. Of this the account which Lady Mary Walker gives of her in her Travels which She Dedicated to the Prince of Wales, and were published some years ago is an Instance. She writes thus: At Spa I contracted an intimate friendship with a young Lady, who I afterwards saw at the English Convent at Liege. She made me acquainted with a Nun whose Name is Christina, and is now Superior. Were your Highness to see her, you would confess a Nunnery was no confinement, nor are the nuns prisoners. Few female figures have so much beauty or so much grace. There is in her Countenance an Expression of sweetness and good Sense which will hardly be equalled in thousands of her sex; but the beauty of the mind which beamed forth in her face, the sweet serenity which enlivened the monastic air of seriousness which was diffused over her fine features entirely captivated my heart.

CHAPTER V.

REVEREND MOTHER AUSTIN WESTBY AND THE LAST YEARS AT LIÉGE.

THE Chapter for the election of a successor to the Reverend Mother Christina Dennett of blessed memory, was held on July 19th, 1781. We have no particulars as to who presided at it, but only the confirmation of the election by the Prince Bishop. The choice of the Chapter fell on Mother Austin Westby, a former novice, and most devoted disciple of Mother Christina. She was only thirty-two years of age. She was a daughter of Thomas Westby, Esq., and Margaret Shuttleworth, both natives of Lancashire, and in Baptism she received the name of Bridget.

Though we have no particulars of her childhood, as no memoir of her has been preserved, yet we possess a very interesting proof of her early piety in a very long and beautiful act of consecration to our Blessed Lady, written and signed by her on the feast of the Assumption, 1764, when she was about fifteen years of age. It is altogether in the spirit of the devotion of the holy bondage of Jesus and Mary with which the name of Blessed Grignon de Montfort is connected, and it is written in a strain of most ardent piety. Some would say that the whole composition of the prayer, divided as it is into five formal paragraphs, is too mature for so young a girl, but we know that when she entered the noviceship at the age of sixteen it was always said of her that she had an old head on young shoulders. Our Constitutions, confirmed by Pope Urban VIII., speak of a devotion similar to this as "proper and peculiar to the Religious of the Holy Sepulchre," so if Bridget Westby was educated at Liége she may have learned the devotion there, though we have no proof that she ever was at school there, and so far as we know the devotion was never promoted among the children, and if she was never at school there, it is all the more remarkable that her vocation should have led her to perhaps the only English convent in which the devotion was established. However, Boudon, in his *Saint Esclavage*, states that English Catholics were remarkable

for this devotion. Bridget Westby took the habit on May 18th, 1766, was clothed on October 6th the same year, and professed on October 27th, 1767, at the age of eighteen, so that she had the benefit of Reverend Mother Christina's training for six months before her profession, and for a year and a half afterwards. Before she left the Noviceship her holy mistress was Prioress. Mother Austin was elected Procuratrix in April, 1772, when only twenty-three years of age. It was during her term of office that the new school was built.

When she was elected Prioress, she was afraid lest the state of great fervour in which Reverend Mother Christina Dennett had left the community should relax under her government, and it was to this fear that the nuns attributed her strictness, for with all their veneration for her they used to own that she was a very strict Superior. We are fortunate in possessing more of her spiritual memoranda than of those of her predecessor, and they justify the tradition that she was much favoured by God, and also show her in a very amiable light.

Like her predecessor, Reverend Mother Austin Westby relied much on the direction and assistance of Father John Howard. To her great grief he died on October 16th, 1783. A few words must be said about this holy man, whose memory has always been held in veneration here. His real name was Holme, Howard being his mother's maiden name. He entered the Society at Watten, on September 7th, 1737, and was professed on February 2nd, 1755. He was appointed Director of our community in March, 1764, and in 1768 was named Rector of the English College. After the catastrophe of 1773, he was appointed by the Prince Bishop of Liège to be President of the Anglo-Bavarian College, commonly known as the "Academy," the success of which under his government was notoriously great notwithstanding Dr. Oliver's remark, that "unfortunately he was too much divided between the English nuns in that city and his own immediate subjects, to be so practically and efficiently useful as he might otherwise have been." However, we possess an autograph letter from Dr. Oliver to Mother Agatha Laurenson, dated September 10th, 1826, which contains the facts and dates stated above, and then the following: "If he had the anguish to see the suppression of the Order, he had the comfort of collecting again many of its scattered children, *and of witnessing the flourishing state of the English Academy there over which he presided.*"

We also have a paper which is headed: "A sketch of Mr. John Howard's character," from which the following extract is taken, as it is too long to

be given in full. It says much of his heroic virtues and of the efforts he made to conceal them; it gives no particulars, but observes that these virtues "account for that something which struck every one in everything he said or did without their knowing why. If any one consulted him who felt impelled to very high perfection, he would always find Mr. Howard a very great way before him, and if through God's grace he still aspired to higher things, the Director still soared up higher. He had the greatest contempt for this life and its sufferings. In his later years he was often heard singing in his usual cheerful way these words of a French song: *Quand on est mort c'est pour long tems, on est guéri du mal de dents*. It was generally observed that totally forgetful of and dead to himself he had nothing in view but the greater glory of God, and that he served Him in such a generous and unreserved manner as truly to serve Him for Himself alone."

Several letters written by Father Howard have been preserved, but unfortunately not in the original, but in the handwriting of Mother Joseph Smith. She gives the dates, but carefully conceals to whom they are addressed. The superscription is: "Letters written By Rev. Father Howard To a Religious Person." In spite of her use of the singular number it is difficult to believe that they were addressed to the same person. There are seven of them in all, and the first three written in April, July, and October, 1767, are written to some one much used to supernatural favours. The four others, dated 1769, 1771, 1772, and 1773, might have been written to any good nun of a timorous character. In several of them there are practical solutions of difficulties as to the recitation of the Divine Office in choir. A few extracts from these letters will convey a better notion of Father Howard's character than could any panegyric. One dated July 24th, 1767, is very beautiful. As it has come to us it begins abruptly.

Being presented to our Bd. Lady She took you into her care, above this world and in the Divine Greatness. This great Queen received you as her Child in her Maternal arms, and presented you to our Blessed Saviour who looked on you with Love and in an attractive way, inviting you in an affectionate and tender manner to enter in the great wound of His Sacred Side, there to become Dead and buried in Him Crucified, that you may thereby attain through Him to that Spiritual Resurrection which He has merited for us by His Death. O blessed Soul, what a comfort to see you in God, your Soul is in great grace and favour; it is much beloved by your Lord, and the Queen of Heaven, your Patroness: I rejoice to find by your own words that you already taste and experience the effects of these favours. I am much comforted to find His Divine Majesty has given you so much generosity, and that you have given up all. Retain nothing: this makes

the sacrifice complete. By doing this your soul gets on apace in the ways of God. Rejoice in God who has done great things in you. Don't fear: the Holy Ghost is become your Master. Let Him conduct you as He pleases.

It would be pleasant to know that the letter from which this is taken—and there is more in a similar strain—was written to Reverend Mother Christina, but we can have no certainty of it. The following, written in March, 1773, may also possibly have been written to her, but it seems less likely.

If we reflect, you must observe that the enemy always finds one means or another to throw us into disquiet and uneasiness. It is your weak side to be easily disturbed with fears, and therefore it is on this side that the cunning enemy makes his attack in order to hinder your progress in the way of perfection. Now to frustrate his designs it is plain you must take a way exactly contrary to his. You must in general be convinced that the fears which on occasion you experience are groundless, that they are the Enemy's weapons to hurt you, that by them he gets entrance into your soul, and disturbs its peace. The best for you is to take no voluntary notice of them, but when you feel them, without giving the least sign of disturbance or concern to go on with the work in hand, and try to acquit yourself of the incumbent duty with great perfection. You must try when you feel these fears to behave so that the Enemy himself may not be able to discern the least alteration in you. There is nothing that confounds him more than this humble behaviour. . . . Now you must give me leave to insist upon execution, for you good Women are much more ready to ask than to follow advice.

It is a pity that space does not permit longer extracts, for every page of these letters shows a combination of the practical and the pithy with the sublime.

Mention has already been made of the Father's words to Reverend Mother Christina: "Shall I never see a Teresa here?" and how these words so often repeated were always considered to have been a prediction of her future work. Another anecdote told of him is, that he frequently said to the nuns: "You must go over to England, and become a flourishing community beyond St. James'," and when they asked how they should get there, he said: "Oh, you will go by a small bridge," which seemed ridiculous. It so happened that the name of the ship which brought them over from Rotterdam was the *Smallbridge*.

We possess some large relics of St. Ursula and her companions, which used to be exposed on an altar in the choir at Liège during the octave of the feast. One of the nuns said that she could not believe in the great number of the Virgins. "All I can say," answered Father Howard, "is that

I see your choir full of them, and every day fresh ones." Father Howard became seriously ill towards the end of September, 1783. On October 5th, Reverend Mother Austin Westby wrote :

Received from Almighty God very great peace, comfort, spiritual joy, confidence in Him, resignation and great disengagement of heart. Almighty God had put my soul in this state from the Wednesday before (the day Father Howard's sickness seemed to be serious) and I at first thought it was perhaps a mark that Almighty God would hear our prayers respecting Father Howard's recovery, but was soon undeceived, for the next day I had a clear conviction that it was only to prepare and enable me to bear the loss and make the sacrifice Almighty God required of me, which I tried to do, but suffered much, when Almighty God withdrew Himself, and left me to myself. But on Sunday last (September 28th), after I had understood from Fr. Howard that he was to die, my good God, after a little struggle, enabled me generously to give up all, though I felt most intensely, and had a full view of the greatness of the loss in all its circumstances. After this Almighty God gave me such a lively confidence in Him, and put me in such a state of peace and recollection, that I was hardly sensible of the natural grief and pain I suffered, for it never prevented me from attending to the wants and afflictions of others, nor from discharging my common duties, but I believe I had very little merit, for Almighty God did all for me, and He gave me so great conformity to His Will, that I could neither will nor pray for anything but the accomplishment of His most adorable will.

She writes on Sunday, October 19th :

During the past week I had not time to write, but was in prayer and union with Almighty God the greatest part of the day, which supported, animated and kept my soul in great peace amidst all the anxiety and concern with which I was oppressed, but on Thursday, the day Fr. Howard died, God withdrew all sensible comfort and devotion, and left me in great suffering of every sort all the day, but enabled me to act independently of it, at least in great measure, and I think I was in the mean (*sic*) quite resigned and even content to suffer the present, or any other afflictions it should please God to send, only begged Him not to chastise us in His anger, but give us grace to answer His divine designs. I remained so till Saturday, and on Saturday morning at the beginning of the Requiem, I was so oppressed both in body and mind that I thought I should not be able to support it any longer, when raising my heart to heaven where I firmly believed he already was, for I could never pray for him, I said to him, O my good Father, have pity on me and help me. I did so almost without knowing what I did, but at that moment I found an entire change in myself both in body and soul, being free from all pain and grief, full of peace, comfort and spiritual joy, and I could do nothing but rejoice at the accomplishment of the divine Will, and at the happiness and power of His faithful servant to whose intercession I was convinced I owed the sudden

change I had felt. I remained in great peace and recollection all the rest of the day and all this morning, and seem firmly resolved to labour and suffer anything sooner than fail in any point of what he had recommended, or God required of me.

Tuesday, October 21st :

During the morning I had given way to dejecting thoughts, and was quite oppressed with grief, solicitude and fear lest God should not be served and honoured in this house in the manner He expected and required. I found myself interiorly corrected for giving way to such thoughts, and immediately after my soul was in great peace, and all my senses recollected in Almighty God, and I had, as it were, a glimpse of the glory, jubilation, &c., Fr. Howard enjoyed in Heaven. He seemed to look down on me with complacency, as it were, encouraging me to labour, and promising to help and protect us. This passed in a moment, but the effects still remain. I mean the peace, joy and courage it produced.

These extracts are rather long, but they will help the reader to know Mother Austin Westby better, and they show how she esteemed Father Howard. The feeling was shared by the whole community.

The holy man died in the out-quarters of our convent. On the morning of his death he said to his attendants: "Lift me up that I may once more see my angels go to Matins." Probably he thus got a view of some lighted corridor through which the nuns had to pass. His precious remains were deposited next to those of Mother Christina Dennett, not in the common vault of the community, but on the right hand of the high altar.

The following words were engraved on what is called his "monument":

HERE LIES

THE REV. MR. JOHN HOWARD,

LAST RECTOR OF THE COLLEGE OF ENGLISH JESUITS AT LIEGE,

FIRST PRESIDENT

Of the Anglo-Bavarian Academy erected 10 years since in the same city for the education of Youth whom he loved with the tenderness of a Father, and whose improvement in Virtue and Science was the chief object of his care.

A solid Piety, an ardent zeal for the Salvation of Souls, a Fortitude and Greatness of Soul Superior to the rudest Shocks of Adversity, Profound Science, the most amiable Meekness and consummate Prudence characterized this true Religious.

A Director of Souls no less zealous than prudent, 20 years did he make Piety and Virtue flourish in this House where he piously departed in the peace of Our Lord, October 16th, 1783.

Penetrated with Grief and Gratitude, his spiritual Children erected this Monument to the Memory of the Best of Fathers.

R. I. PACE.

Father Francis Clifton, whose real name seems to have been Fanning, succeeded Father Howard as President of the Anglo-Bavarian Academy, and also as confessor of the nuns. His signature occurs in our examination register on December 19th, 1783, as Vice-Director and President of the English Academy. This office he can only have held for a very short time, but he continued to be confessor of the nuns until long after they were settled at New Hall.

Reverend Mother Austin Westby suffered from ill-health nearly all the time she was Superior, which was only four years and eight months. We do not know the nature of her illness, but her sufferings were quite unusually acute. She was only thirty-seven years of age when she died, on the 3rd of March, 1786, fortified by the last sacraments and in very perfect dispositions. Like her predecessor, her title was "of the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

The reader will remember that Mother Austin was a strict Superior. As but few examples of this strictness have come down to us, it may be as well to peep into her note-book to see what motives influenced her when she thought it necessary to correct the faults of her subjects. On December 21st, 1783, she writes:

During the past week I was very often in dryness and suffering, but content, resolute and exact in the performance of my duties. Received also from Almighty God a greater degree of that meek and patient zeal I had so long begged of Him, so that I can now show kindness and condescension to others without that fear of being actuated therein by natural compassion which used to perplex me, it has also greatly diminished the solicitude I used to feel when I saw anyone commit a fault, follow their humour, &c., which arose likewise lest I should indulge or strengthen their passions, and be answerable for all the bad consequences that might (be) produced, were it not immediately corrected, which I saw could not always be done.

On January, 16th, 1784, the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, she writes:

Peace, joy, love, devotion to and confidence in the all saving and holy Name of my Jesus. A heavenly dew or unction seemed to diffuse itself and overspread

my soul, so as to verify to the letter those words of the office, of which I was reminded, "Oil poured out is His Name." I remained in a state of recollection, peace and love during the rest of the day.

On March 14th, the same year, she writes :

During the past week I was chiefly drawn during prayer to a peaceful attention to Alm^ty God, sometimes united to him, and more frequently reposing in him, being surrounded with, and if I may say so, supported and carried by the arms of his Divine Immensity and goodness, in which I am, as it were, engulfed and lost. In my ordinary duties I am still attentive to practise the virtues of mortification and humility whenever the occasion offers in the manner I saw and purposed last week. Have also aimed particularly at not sparing myself or seeking my own conveniency in what regards my office, but give myself and time up to others, considering myself as the servant and slave of all.

On Holy Saturday when I was praying for some of the religious, . . . I was made to understand the great advantages of humble, simple prayer, how powerful it was, and how pleasing to our D Saviour, that nothing his D Providence permitted was beneath his attention, or too trivial to be recommended to him.

Very precious to us are the following words, written on January 1st, 1785 :

Notwithstanding my weakness and infidelity Almty God has frequently given me new lights on the excellency of my vocation, and of my particular order or institute, which He lets me see is more perfect and more meritorious than that of any other religious women, though apparently less rigorous than many others, because it unites the active and contemplative, and requires an entire crucifixion of our whole selves and all created things in order to live only in and for God. Grief to see myself so far from this state, and that so few enter into the true spirit of our constitutions.

On February 28th the same year :

Almty God has given me a great deal of comfort during this month. Sometimes he is pleased to let me see the special protection he has over this house by showing me that he carries it in the sacred bosom of his divine Providence, and by stretching his divine arms over us, seems to keep all danger at a distance. I have also seen our Bd Lady and some of the angels protecting us in the manner I had begged her one night some time ago when she gave an assurance of her protection. I cannot pray in that manner when I will, only when it is given me, but when it is, I am sure to obtain what I ask. My usual manner of prayer when left more to myself, though in recollection, is so simple and familiar, that I should be afraid of giving disedification by expressing it if it were in my power, but it is my heart that speaks to a tender and loving Father, and He does not seem offended at my simplicity.

The whole manuscript is marked by the same clearness and simplicity. The writing is also very clear and good.

Mother Mary Aloysia Clough was elected to succeed her. The Chapter was held on March 10th, 1786, "under the presidency of the Honble. T. Preston Tréfoncier, and Monr. le Chanoine Wassiege, both of the Synod, together with Monr. le Brun, under secretary to the Vicaire, and Mr. F. Clifton, our Confessor."

Reverend Mother Aloysia Clough was a daughter of Richard Clough, Esq., of Shropshire. Her Mother was Mary Hornyold, eldest daughter of John Hornyold, Esq., of Blackmore Park and Hanley Castle, Worcestershire, and of Mary, daughter of Sir Piers Mostyn of Talacre. She was born in 1738 or 1739, and received in Baptism the name of Bridget, then a very favourite one among English Catholics. Of her early life we know nothing. Her sister, Elizabeth, about seven years older than herself, was professed on December 8th, 1750, aged eighteen, and took the name of Mary Xaveria. She was Subprioress at the time of her sister's elevation as Prioress, and remained in that office until her five years had expired. This is the only instance in our annals of two sisters having held these offices together. Mother Aloysia had been Subprioress for the five previous years, and Mother Xaveria for five years before that, so that the two sisters Clough were Subprioresses from 1773 to 1788. Mother Xaveria died on May 24th, 1790, aged fifty-eight. Mother Paula Clough, who died in 1754, was probably aunt to these gifted sisters. She was a daughter of Richard Clough, Esq., and Elizabeth Berington.

Mother Aloysia was followed into Religion after a few years by her cousins Catherine and Bridget Berington, daughters of John Berington, Esq., of Winsley Hall, Herefordshire, and Winefred Hornyold, a sister of Mrs. Clough. Catherine was professed in 1763, and took the name of Mary Benedict. She died in 1786, before she had completed her second term as Procuratrix. Bridget was professed in 1787, while Reverend Mother Christina Dennet* was Mistress of Novices. She took the name of Sister Mary Stanislaus, and died June 7th, 1774, at the age of twenty-five. Mother Chantal Berington died the same year, on January 4th. She was a widow, her maiden name being Frances Kempson. She was professed November 21st, 1772, at forty-four years of age, and died while still a young professed.

Several other nuns who died in the latter years of residence at Liége should be mentioned. Mother Francis Borgia Burnett took the first habit November 8th, 1701, aged fifteen, and died December 30th, 1777, having

completed seventy-six years of religious life. Thus she entered while Mother Susan Hawley was still living, and died in Reverend Mother Christina Dennett's time. She also made the acquaintance of Mother Austin Westby and Mother Aloysia Clough when they were private nuns, and Mother Agatha, and others of the Liége community who died towards the middle of this century. When we reflect that there are still those living who knew Mother Agatha, we are brought much nearer to the days of our foundress, and are forced still more to lament that our traditions are not more vivid and circumstantial. Mother Borgia seems to have been an able person, as her name appears as a member of the Council.

Mother James Tankred was the elder of two sisters, one of whom, Sister Mary Regis, died in 1761, after seven years of profession, but Mother James attained the age of sixty, and used to be spoken of as "old" Mother James. She was distinguished for her great love of the choir, so that she sang with great zeal, but not in such a way as to promote the devotion of her neighbours. She died in the night of January 22nd, 1784. On the following morning the convent door was besieged by people who came to inquire what feast had been kept the night before, as such beautiful music had been heard to proceed from the choir.

The same year died a very holy lay-sister named Sister Ann Teresa Kennard. Reverend Mother Austin Westby saw her in some way attacked by the devil on her death-bed, but very quickly comforted by St. Michael and the holy Angels. She died in great peace and joy, and Mother Austin attributed this happy change to her submissive obedience.

Mother Monica Emmott was a widow, whose maiden name was Sibeth Croft. She was a grandmother and fifty years of age at the time of her profession in 1758. She became a very active and useful member and lived till 1787. Her grand-child, Catherine Perrin, entered the Noviceship in 1772, and took the name of Mary Rose. Mother Rose was one of those who lived through the migration and long after, for she died at New Hall in 1832. Mother Felicitas Corcoran is the best remembered of the well-qualified novices so providentially sent when Mother Christina had made up her mind to improve the school. She was born in Dublin and was the first Irish nun professed at Liége, for others who were of Irish parentage came from America or the West Indies. She was professed in 1777 and was at once employed in the school. She was an excellent teacher and was much beloved in the school. She had the charge of the Kingstide plays, and the difficulty of procuring suitable pieces was so great that she composed a large number

herself. They are not masterpieces, but many duller plays have been published. She was always something of an invalid. She died only ten years after her profession, a few months after Mother Austin Westby, on January 25th, 1787.

Mother Mary Bernard Plowden was a fellow-novice of Reverend Mother Christina Dennett, but was professed nearly a year before her, on November 10th, 1748, at nineteen years of age. She was one of the eldest of the fifteen children of William Plowden, Esq., and the Hon. Frances Dormer, and sister to Father Robert and Father Charles Plowden, S.J. She had a great talent for business and was a very energetic Procuratrix, as any one who examines our registers may see. She died December 14th, 1787, aged fifty-eight. Her full title was Mother Mary Bernard of the Seven Dolours. A younger sister, named Mary Plowden, was clothed May 5th, 1759, taking the name of Sister Mary Stanislaus, but she did not persevere.

The name of Sister Joseph Sales Chichester has been in benediction, especially among the novices, from her day to ours, because to her we are indebted for the seven minutes' sign on the great clock which so greatly facilitates the ringing the "observance" bell. But she had many other claims on our remembrance. Her religious life was very short, but the old Liége nuns used to speak of her as if it had been a privilege to know one so gifted and so holy. She was a daughter of John Chichester, Esq., of Arlington, and of Mary Macdonald, of Tiendrish, Lochabar, Scotland. She was at school at Liége from October, 1781, to June, 1783. Her mother, Mary Macdonald, was a daughter of Donald Macdonald, who was executed at Carlisle for the part he took in the rising of 1745, and he was brother to Keppoch, who fell at Culloden. The history of the Macdonalds tells us that "Catherine, the eldest Miss Chichester, was a very accomplished woman, who, to many other splendid endowments of mind, possessed such a talent for painting as made her acknowledged as the first lady painter of the age. She took the veil at an early age, and died at Liége, universally lamented. Several of her drawings are in the possession of Mr. Constable."

She did not "take the veil" at a very early age, for at her profession on December 8th, 1790, she was twenty-four years of age. Among her other gifts to the sacristy on that occasion was a very handsome set of black velvet vestments, with cope and altar frontal. These were first used at her own funeral, and are still in use from time to time.

No knowledge of any painting executed by her has been preserved, though she presented several pictures to the community at the time of her

profession; but tradition tells us that she employed an artist to paint them. Those which we know best are the Dead Christ, now in the work-room, surrounded by our Lady, St. Joseph, St. John Baptist, St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, St. Aloysius, and St. Stanislaus, and the very devotional one of St. Joseph with the Divine Infant in his arms, now in the infirmary, and that of her other patron, St. Francis of Sales. Her vocation was one that took the world by surprise, as she was a great favourite in society for her gifts of body and mind. She gave herself to God with the greatest generosity, and seemed as if she could not do enough to show her gratitude to God for her vocation and her love for it. Though she had a remarkably good judgment and was capable of the greatest things, she was like a little child in the hands of her Superiors, seemingly without any will or judgment of her own. It was always said of her that her obedience was perfect. She was confined to the infirmary from the day of her profession, which she only survived for four months, as she died on April 12th, 1791. Her fervour was so well recognized that, when she died, Father Clifton said she must have gone to Heaven like an arrow from a bow.

The last to die at Liége was Mother Clementina Nandyke, who had been an able member. She had been Reverend Mother Christina Dennett's predecessor as Subprioress, and had attained the age of seventy-two when she died in the midst of the troubles, on April 12th, 1793. Seven nuns in all died between the breaking out of the troubles in 1789 and the departure from Liége. Beside the two just named, there were Mother Bridget Dougherty from Pennsylvania, a widow, whose maiden name was Kelsey, Mother Xaveria Clough, Mother Joanna Regis Hagan, from Maryland, Sister Mary Rosen, a lay-sister, and Mother Mechtilde Meade, from the island of Monserrat.

A complete list of the ordinary confessors at Liége is wanting. Besides M. D'Oupey, who apparently was the first, the Rev. Richard Talbot was ordinary confessor from 1685 to 1693. This merely means that his signature occurs with *Confessarius Ordinarius* after it at these dates and between them. The same must be said of the Rev. Patrick Rosseter in 1695 and of the Rev. Laurence Breers in 1696. The Rev. Peter Wright's name occurs in this way first in 1701, and many times over until 1722, at the end of which year he died, November 24th, 1722. His name is the first of any priest that occurs in our obituary. He gave the handsome music Mass-books for the Proper Offices of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. On the fly-leaf occur the words: "*Ex donis R. D. Petri Wright, Hujus monasterii Confessarii dignissimi.*"

The following entry in the "book of benefactors" occurs under the date 1724: "Mr. Molins, our Confessor, gave a fine surplice to our Church, and new Christals to ye little remonstrance. He has also given . . . many other things for ye service of ye community . . . and the striking of the half hour of our clock." There is no reference to him elsewhere. The name of Rev. James Robinson, followed by the words *Confessarius Ordinarius*, occurs for the first time in 1742 in the examination register, and it is mentioned very frequently in the book of benefactors between the years 1752 and 1774, when he died on April 5th. His name is in the obituary. The dates of his sojourn in the convent might lead us to connect his name with the troubles that took place in the early days of Reverend Mother Christina's religious life, but there is no tradition to support such an inference, on the contrary, he seems to have been much respected by the community in his life and after his death. Meanwhile, in 1731 and the following three years, we find Father Christopher Walmesley, S.J., signing himself "*Directeur du Monastère.*" Father Charles Roëls, S.J., followed him in the same office, and his name occurs in our obituary under the date March 22nd, 1764, as Father Roëls, "our director." He was a great friend of Reverend Mother Christina Dennett in the early days of her religious life. Father Walmesley, S.J., is the first Jesuit who signs himself "director," but it is almost certain that one of the Fathers was always appointed "director" from the very beginning, with the exception of a short period, probably very early in the eighteenth century.

The school continued to flourish more and more from Reverend Mother Christina's time until close upon the departure from Liège, when, on account of the troubles of the time, the nuns began to refuse to accept new pupils. One of the last prospectuses sent out announces that the aim of all the training given in the convent is to form the hearts of young girls to virtue, to teach them to love the practices of religion, and to instruct them in them thoroughly; to inspire them with a taste for application and work, with good order and domestic economy, to adorn their minds and accustom them to act from sentiments of honour. . . . Christian doctrine is explained by Holy Scripture in points which are controverted for the sake of those to whom such knowledge may become necessary.

The ordinary studies are reading, writing, English, French, and Italian grammatically; sacred and profane history; arithmetic, book-keeping, all that belongs to epistolary composition in different ranks of life, heraldry, the use of the globes, geography, the principles of natural history so far as may be found useful for girls, embroidery and all sorts of needlework; the art of

drawing and painting flowers. Dancing, music, and *portrait painting* are all extras, also *miniatures on ivory*. These extras were each about three guineas a year. The pension was seventeen guineas a year, including table and bed-room linen, fire and light, two guineas a year for washing, two for writing materials, and one for entrance fee. Fires were kept up in the class-rooms, refectory, and dormitories all through the cold weather. The dinner consisted of soup and two or three kinds of meat, and *some* others of vegetables, according to season, and the supper of salad and two "portions" of meat followed by a dessert. Those whose parents were not satisfied with the ordinary breakfast were to be charged extra for tea and sugar. They were to be taught to do the "honours of the table" and to be very attentive to one another. A uniform was to be worn, but no details are given of it.

The school registers are complete from 1771. They show that a great number of English and Irish girls found their way to our convent, and also that many Belgians and Germans were also admitted. The prospectus lays stress on the great salubrity of the air and the commodiousness of the buildings. The old nuns used to speak much of the extreme beauty of the scenery, especially to the north and west of the convent.

But the favourite topic of those old nuns was not the school, but the glories of the convent choir. The High Masses were very numerous indeed, though no precise record has been kept of them, but Mother Agatha has left us a tabulated list of the parts of the Divine Office that were sung on various feasts. Thus on Easter Sunday the whole of the Office was sung except Sext and None. On Low Sunday Prime, Tierce, Vespers, and Compline were sung. On Whit Sunday, *Te Deum*, Lauds, Tierce, Vespers, and Compline. On the feasts of the Sacred Heart, St. James, the Dedication, St. Helen, St. Augustine, and the Ascension, *Te Deum*, Prime, Tierce, Vespers, and Compline. On Corpus Christi and the Assumption, *Te Deum*, Lauds, Prime, Tierce, Vespers, and Compline. On the feasts of St. John Baptist, St. Aloysius, SS. Peter and Paul, Dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and St. Lambert, *Te Deum*, Prime, Vespers, and Compline. On the feast of the Blessed Trinity, *Te Deum*, Prime, Vespers, and Compline. On the Immaculate Conception, *Te Deum*, Prime, and Vespers. In 1784 they began to celebrate the Nativity of Our Lady in much the same way.

Before bidding farewell to Liège a few jottings must be taken from our book of benefactors. In 1673 we read: "Received of the most Christian King of France for an Almes, 100 pistolls in gold, wh. with ye profit, mounted to 1442 florins of this Country, of which 760 florins went in pay of ye

Br. Cockins, and the rest was employed to Mr. Hennin, as it was owing to him for money advanced to us in ye year preceding." Here we have a proof that Louis XIV. was one of our benefactors and has been prayed for as such ever since.

"Lord Castlemaine, in alms, 166 florins.

From Lord Carrington, Mother M. Joseph's father, 166 fl.

In 1675. From Lord Castlemaine, 800 fl., of which 380 went to pay ye Br. Cockins, and smaller sums from Mr. Hildesley, Mr. Dolman, and others. From our Gardener's father, to be prayed for, 8 fl.

In 1681. Received 14 Patacoons, which the Dames of Ghent¹ gave us for a recreation. This must surely have been the result of some jubilee at Ghent of one of the Dames who had a sister at Liége. We thank the Dames of Ghent for that recreation.

The Pope's Holiness, 200 patacoons.

The Cole marchant hath given 4 gong of Coles, to be prayed for.

Sister Martha's brother discounted ten florins upon beer, for to be prayed for.

In 1682. From Mme. Plenevaux, to pray for her brother's sole, Mr. Randack, 12 fl.

In 1683. A legacy of £20 English, by means of Mr. Lovell, a Jesuit, from one Mrs. Mary Hunt, that dyed and left it to us.

So year after year alms were received from England, generally from relatives of the nuns.

In ye year 1732 Lady Goring gave us a silver Crucifix and pedestal, which cost above 1,000 fl. In ye same year Mrs. Choalle dyed in our neighbourhood and left to our Remonstrance a dyamant cross valued 90 fl. Lady Gerard, who went to visit ye Holy Land and dyed at Japha, left us 83 fl.

Lady Petres gave us to pray for her, 166 fl.

In 1733 Lady Goring gave us a crimson velvitt missall, garnished with plate, and 4 silver candlesticks and 3 paire of flower potts. In 1734 Lady Goring gave us seven paire of silver flower potts. In 1736 her Ladyship also gave 14 paire of silver flower potts." These are the pretty silver vases which we know so well. "Lady Goring, our special benefactor, at her death, left £20 for the use of the Church, of which we made a silver holy water kettle."

In 1752 we read: "This year our church has been repaired with a new altar, a new Tabernacle, adorned with four hundred ounces of silver, two

¹ Now at Oulton Abbey.

large statues of St. James and St. Helen, new rails, the church new whitened, all this by Benefactors, the chief of which are Reverend Mother, Rev. Mr. James Robinson, our confessour, who has added five handsome vestments, viz., a red velvet, a green velvet, a black, a white, and a purple, all damask and all trimmed with gold or silver." From 1748 benefactions from the Stourton family are incessant. They appear in nearly every page, and range from donations or legacies of several hundred pounds and contributions to buildings, down to loads of coal, oil for lamps, blankets, &c.

In 1762 we read: "The Right honourable Lord Stourton made a covered passage from the house to the school." This was the friend of Reverend Mother Christina Dennett. He used sometimes to board in the out-quarters. Another great benefactor, Mr. John Berkeley, also boarded there.

Besides the new school a completely new out-quarter was built towards the end of the residence at Liége. Several of the boarders are named as benefactors for contributing to the furnishing of their rooms, among others a Mr. Neville. Two "armed" chairs figure among his donations.

We would willingly linger longer over this old book of benefactors, but there are other books that call for a passing mention. The chief of these are the account books of the old hospital of St. Christopher. About sixty of them remain, all folio volumes, some large and some smaller. The oldest that we can now find belongs to the year 1381, and probably when the nuns came over the set was complete from an earlier date than this. They were of great importance to the nuns, as they showed their right to the foundation, and they were among the first valuables that were put into a place of safety. In each volume there is an attestation signed by the then Procuratrix, Mother Mary Bernard Plowden, that it was rebound in 1760, and the date of the register is on the binding. When all idea of returning to Liége was abandoned these ledgers were considered to be of no value, and many of them have been destroyed.

A much more important volume is the examination register of the nuns before the profession and clothing. At this distance of time it is touching to read the answers of the novices to the effect that they desire nothing on earth so much as their holy profession, that they ardently desire it, and similar answers. Nor are the names of the examiners without interest to us. Often they are Jesuit Fathers, of whose labours and sufferings on the English mission we know much, as Father Joseph Simeon, Father Mumford, Father de Sabran, and others. Fortunately these and other registers were brought safe to England, but in preparation for the journey very many papers were

burnt which would have been valuable to us now, but these were not chronicles of the early days of the convent. Mother Agatha has left a statement that it is well known that about seventy years before: ("I write," she says, "in 1820"), the librarian at Liége destroyed a large number of papers in the interests of tidiness, and this is why so few details are known of the early days of the convent. She does not tell us the name of this librarian.

CHAPTER VI.

TROUBLES AT LIÉGE, AND MIGRATION TO ENGLAND.

IN our library there are several manuscript accounts of the nuns' migration from Liége to England, of the troubles that led to it, extending over a period of five years, from August, 1789, to May, 1794, and of the vicissitudes of the community in England, until it was finally settled at New Hall. The first of these accounts was written by Mother Joseph Smith, who was procuratrix at the time when the troubles began. This accounts for the number of details recorded as to money troubles. Her account is a sort of diary, which she continued during the long rambles of the community, apparently writing as the events took place. Mother Aloysia Austin revised this manuscript, inserting little facts that Mother M. Joseph had left out. She wrote in 1817. There is also a short account by Mother Agatha Laurenson, chiefly of the residence of the nuns in London, at Holm Hall, and Dean House. There is a fourth manuscript, by Father John Laurenson, written by him at Brough Hall in 1828, and copied by Mother Agatha at New Hall in 1829. This MS. gives the account of the migration of the Fathers of the Academy, from Liége to Stonyhurst, but it makes frequent mention of our community, and it gives the history of the troubles at Liége so briefly and clearly that it may be as well to begin with it.

This spirit (of anarchy) manifested itself in the Principality of Liege almost as soon as it began to spread its baneful influence over France. Here, as in that ill-fated Kingdom, it was fomented by those disorganizing and levelling principles which were directed at once against the altar and the throne; but it did not break into acts of open violence before the 17th of August in the year 1789. On that day, the populace, arrogating to themselves the specious title of Patriots, flew to arms, took forcible possession of the Citadel, which by its elevated position commanded the Town, and marched in a tumultuous body to Seraing, where the Prince then was, and which was the usual country residence of the Princes of Liege during the summer months. Count de Hoensbroeck was at this time Bishop and Prince. . . . Surrounded by a lawless and armed rabble, he was too prudent to oppose any resistance, and therefore, however reluctantly, submitted patiently to whatever was

required of him. He was hurried away without ceremony to Liege, and confined closely to his episcopal palace, after which the insurgents established a patrol in every parish, and at the instigation of some of the leading men of the city, assumed the reins of government into their own hands.

Soon after the prince had been arrested, it was represented by his friends that the precarious state of his health necessarily required more air and exercise than his present confined situation would admit. He was in consequence allowed to return to his country seat, where in a few days he happily found means to elude the vigilance of his guards, and to escape to the Abbey of St. Maximin at Triers, in which comfortable and secure retreat he remained until peace and order were restored.

Incensed at the escape of their prisoner whom they had detained by way of hostage to ensure impunity, the insurgents testified their vexation by great excesses, but the chief objects of their vengeance were the ecclesiastic and religious persons with which Liege abounded. Several convents were subjected to arbitrary vexations, and among the rest that of the English Nuns which was situate on the Avroy.

The convent account treats of all this as follows :

The Revolution at Liege began upon the 17th of August 1789. The Bourgeois took up arms, and guarded the town. There was a Patrole in each Parish. Those of the Parish of St. Christopher, our Parish, were ordered to remain in our first Speak-house and the Portal for 2 or 3 Nights, after which they were removed ; but for above 6 weeks or 2 Months we were obliged to give them each day 12 Quarts of Beer, a pound and a half of Butter, a Loaf and a half or 2 loaves of Bread and a bottle of Gin, so that we were at above £30 expense. However, we were content to do this in order to keep them quiet, and prevent them from being troublesome to us—as their chief aim seemed to be against Ecclesiastics and religious Persons ; and several convents suffered much. Almost all the curates were obliged to fly the Country, chiefly on account of a considerable sum of Money which had been left by one of the Princes of Liege for a Fund for the maintenance of the Poor of several different Parishes, and which was in the hands of their respective Curates. The Poor required from each of them an exact account how the Interest had hitherto been distributed, and required that they should pay them the Principal. In this they were supported by the Magistrates of the Town, and there were continual Riots and bustles on this Account. This made everyone who had Poor Rents fear for themselves. In the month of June, 1790, a Patriotical Gift was demanded from all the Chapters, Collegiates, Convents, &c., but we being Strangers took no notice of this, till such time as the States addressed to us two or three printed papers upon this subject. A Quarter of the annual Revenue which they had in the Country was what was required for each one to give, in the Papers which they had published to this effect. We consulted several Persons upon the subject, and sent Mr. Goroux our Lawyer to Comte Lannoy, one of the Principal Persons of the Town, with a calculation of our annual Revenue, which was proved to be about 4700 Liege

Florins. The Answer was that we might give ff 1000 which he looked upon as near the 4th part of our annual rents. We immediately remitted the above sum of ff 1000 by the hands of our Lawyer to Count Berlo who was the Person appointed to receive these Patriotic Gifts. He gave a receipt for the same, which is in the Box with the 3 Keys. They wrote also on the bottom of the Paper on which we sent the account of our Annual Revenue, that no further Demands were to be made upon the Convents, who had given the quarter of their Revenue. We remained quiet until the 7th Sept. following, though not without Apprehensions, as we had heard that the Poor meant to attack us about the Bread which we were obliged to give them every week. Accordingly on that Day, the Deputies of the Poor of the Parish of St. Christopher, came by their Desire, viz., 2 Commissaries and a Member whom they had chosen to enquire about the Obligation which was entailed on our Foundation of distributing every week rye or bread to the Poor, and of which they had found mention made in the Registers of St. Christopher. They pretended to lay claim to this charity for those of the Parish only. We assured them that the Obligation of the Charity had been faithfully fulfilled by the 27 Loaves of Bread which were weekly distributed to poor Persons, and that we were at liberty to give this charity to whom we pleased, and that the Poor of the Parish had no just right or claim to it. Upon this they made a supplique to the Magistrates to oblige us to send our Registers and Papers respecting our Foundation to be examined at the Town-house—which was granted, and an order was sent to us to this effect. But we addressed another supplique in answer, to petition them to appoint one or more of their Council to come to our Convent and examine them, which they very graciously granted. The next Day they sent Mr. Pacquo, a Lawyer remarkable for his Equity and Justice. The Deputies of the Parish accompanied him, with an Écrivain, an Impertinent Man whom they had employed to act in this business for them; and who tried to be as troublesome as he could, and made several efforts to do us mischief, and bring us into Difficulties, but some of the Magistrates befriended us, and treated him as he deserved, threatening to have him punished if he did not desist. We showed them a Copy of the Bull for the Dissolution of the Coquins, and the Establishment of our Convent, also the Pope's, the Prince's, and the Magistrates' leave for the Establishment of our English Convent at Liege, likewise a Copy of the Prince's permission for leaving off serving the Hospital, dated in the year 1711. They were therefore convinced, by the perusal of the above mentioned Papers, that our Foundation was good, and that the Poor of our Parish had no right to demand this charity which we were obliged to give, for it was fixed to no particular Persons, but depended upon ourselves to give it to whoever we thought proper, which clearly appeared both by the Pope's Bulls and the Prince's permission for not serving the Hospital, and which expressly says that the Bread or Corn shall be given to the Poor—not nominated, but to whom we please. This was a great disappointment to the Poor People, who expected that we should have had a considerable sum of Money to pay to them, not only for this Rent, which they imagined was redeemable, and meant to oblige us to pay them the Principal, but also, could they have proved that it belonged to the Poor of their Parish, they would have made us pay them all the

years back, which we could not have proved had been given in our own Parish. There remained however one Difficulty with regard to the Quantity, which was not specified in any of these Papers, nor could we find any others concerning our Foundation. This they easily gave credit to, as the Bull for the Dissolution of the Coquins expressly says that they burned and destroyed all the Papers of their Foundation, that we might not get possession of them. This Bull only says that we shall lodge and give food to poor Persons and Pilgrims, and a certain quantity of Corn or Bread every week to the Poor. We told them that all we knew was that when we first came to the House, we built the Hospital at the end of the Garden for Pilgrims, and that they were lodged 3 nights each, and had Soup, Bread and Beer for 3 Days, but finding this very inconvenient, we got the above specified Dispensation in the year 1711, after which at first they gave little white Mitches to all the Poor that came for them every Friday. After some years, finding great Difficulties ensue from this Practice, they chose a certain number of Poor Persons to whom was constantly distributed every week 27 loaves of Brown Bread. We also gave Soup to some of them twice a week, and from time to time a little small Beer. From this recital they were convinced we had hitherto fulfilled our obligation, but the Lawyer, Mr. Pacquo, was of opinion that to satisfy the Poor of the Parish who were much disposed to Riots, we had better in future give the Charity to them, either in Bread or Corn as we pleased, and they gave us a few Days to conclude what Reverend Mother and the Community should judge to be best. In the Interim new search was made to find the Quantity of Corn, or number of Persons specified to whom this Charity was to be given, but no Memorandum was to be found of the kind, except that in one of the Old Diurnals, wherein is marked the Disbursements of the House, 3 Sty of Rye is specified for the weekly allowance for the Poor, and an old Supplique dated before the year 1711 in which we had obtained permission to leave off serving the Hospital—it had been made to petition an exemption from paying the Duty put upon Bread and Beer, and alleges as a reason for demanding it, the obligation they had of giving 3 Sty of Rye every week to the Poor. This is the only thing which is there clearly expressed, tho' it also makes mention of giving Lodging and Food to 16 poor Persons from All Saints till Easter. This last Article seems very dubious, as we never heard that anything of the kind had ever been practised from the beginning of the House, tho' some of the Nuns still living knew several who lived in the time of our first Superior, and remembered their serving the Hospital. At any rate this obligation was taken off by the above mentioned Dispensation obtained in 1711 till such times as we were out of Debt and in good Circumstances. The Supplique which mentions these Particulars is in the Box of three Keys. We sent for a Friend who was one of the best Lawyers in the Town, and consulted him what we should do. After having examined the Papers which we had shown to Mr. Pacquo and the Deputies, and that we had told him we had found mention made of 3 Sty of Rye being the quantity which we were to give each week; upon a Calculation made, he found that the Bread we distributed every week was to much the same value, as we made our Loaves much larger than the Bakers generally do. He advised us to send a supplique to

the Magistrates of the Town (a copy of which is in the Box of the 3 Keys) by which we left the Decision of the Distribution of the Charity to them, and they gave it in favour of the Parish of St. Christopher. We sent for the Lawyer, Mr. Pacquo, and Deputies, who required the Procuratrix to take an Oath that nothing more than what has been mentioned could be found concerning our Obligation of giving this Charity. They then drew up an Act, by which we agreed to give to the Poor of our own Parish 3 Sty or Bushels of Rye every week. It was to be delivered once every 4 weeks to the Member of the said Poor, and we agreed to begin to deliver it the following Monday, which was the 20th of September, 1790, for the succeeding 4 weeks, from which date we gave no more bread. The Act was drawn up at the Country Grate by Mr. Pacquo in presence of the Member and Deputies of the Parish, the Procuratrix and one of the Council, and Mr. Franck our Notary, and signed by Reverend Mother, the Counsellors, and the Persons above specified. In December the same year, there was an order given that one Person out of each family should be obliged to mount Guard, the Convents not excepted, and in case they did not send a Man, they were to pay forty Pence, which accordingly we did, but only once, for on the 12th of January, 1791, the Imperial Troops¹ entered the Town with the greatest Tranquillity, as they met not with the least opposition, for the different Regiments that had been raised by the People of the Town during the Revolution, with the Bourg-Maitre and the Persons who had been the chief cause of these Disturbances, went out at one end of the Town, whilst the Imperial Troops entered at the other. For some time before the arrival of these Troops, the Soldiers and Mob had raised Riots and committed great Disorders, pillaged Houses, broke windows, burned down some Farms in the Country, robbed and stole from the poor Farmers, &c. By a special Providence, we received not the least damage, on the contrary, being sensible of the advantage our Convent was to the Country on account of the considerable Sums of Money which we annually brought into the Town, of which we made a Calculation and took care they should be duly informed, the Magistrates and others were on all occasions very civil and obliging to us, more especially as we made it a point to remain neuter, being Religious Persons and Strangers, we did not think it our Business to interfere in any shape. The Troops¹ as I have said, entered the Town on the 12th of January, and a few Days after reinstated the ancient Bourg Masters and other Magistrates who had been turned out of their Offices during the Revolution. The Tréfonciers² returned, on which occasion a solemn *Te Deum* was sung at St. Lambert's and great rejoicings were made. The Town Bells were rung for 3 days, and we rang ours at the times appointed for the others to be rung. The first Day that the Troops entered the Town, an Officer and a Man and Maid Servant came to lodge in our Out Quarters. We had immediate recourse to one of the Chief Officers to get them removed, on account of the extreme Inconvenience which

¹ The Prince Bishop after his escape from Seraing in 1789, had applied for redress, to the Imperial Chamber of Wetzlaer, which issued a decree ordering the affairs of Liége to be restored to the state in which they were before the Revolution. Hence the arrival of the Imperial troops in January, 1791.

² Canons of the Cathedral of St. Lambert.

we foresaw would arise from having such Lodgers. Accordingly he was ordered away the next Day, but left two Soldiers to take care of his Baggage, which still remained in our Out quarters. On the 15th they sent 20 Soldiers to us to be lodged. This was thought to be a trick of the Captain, who was much displeased at having been removed. However, notwithstanding the application we made to the Civil Magistrates, the General, &c., we were obliged to let them remain, and give them Victuals that Day and the Night following, after which they were withdrawn. Several others came after this for Lodging, but we persisted in making application to the above mentioned Persons, and at last, chiefly through the Intercession of Mr. de Latte, the Prince's Secretary, we obtained from the Bourg Masters and Council, with the consent of the General, a Dispensation from lodging any more Soldiers, on account of our being Strangers and rendering great service to the Town and Country. I must not omit mentioning that tho' we had during the time of this Revolution the Prussian Troops in Town for several months, they never offered to lodge at our Convent. The 7th of February being the Day we were to give the 12 Bushels of Rye for the Poor of the Parish, for the 4 ensuing weeks, having heard a few days before, that the Magistrates had already annulled several Acts which had been made during the Revolution, we thought proper to present a Supplique to them, to know what they would have us do in this respect. On the 5th of February they sent us an order to take up our ancient practice of distributing this Charity in Bread as formerly, which accordingly we began to do the following week, having delivered Rye for 5 Months (which came to 60 Bushels) that is from the 20th September to the 7th of February.

On the 13th of the same month the Prince returned to Liege. There were public rejoicings for 3 Days, all the Bells in the Town rang. Not being able to have Illuminations the Night of his arrival, they were deferred till Sunday the 20th. The badness of the weather was the cause. Our Illuminations consisted of 17 Pyramids, each of which contained 50 little tin Lamps. They were fixed against the Wall, between the Windows, from the first Church Window, to the end of the School, and 50 more were nailed round the Image of our Bd. Lady over the great Portal Door. From this time everything went on as usual. During the time of this Revolution the Lawyers had no power to act, so that many of our Tenants did not pay their Rents, and we were obliged, after it was over, to cite great numbers of them.

In the year 1792, upon the 8th of October, being 150 since the foundation of our House, we kept the Jubily of it with the greatest Solemnity. We borrowed a great deal of Church plate, and our Church was most handsomely dressed. We had a Salut¹ on the Eve, and a very fine Music Mass and Salut upon the Day, which our singing Master, Mr. Le Clerq made us a present of. We had Recreation and a very handsome treat in the Refectory.

Here we must return to Father John Laurenson's MS.

¹ Benediction.

On the previous June 3, died Prince Hoensbroeck, and he was succeeded by Francis Anthony Count de Méan his Suffragan. Meanwhile we learnt from the public papers the increasing horrors of the French Revolution with dismay indeed and disgust, but with little apprehension of our so soon experiencing its direful results.

Our first serious cause of alarm was the victory which General Dumourier gained at Jemappes on the 5th of November, 1792, over the Austrians, commanded by the Prince of Saxe Teschen, and which was so decisive that it was long before any effectual resistance was again made to the progress of the French. The fall of the strong town of Mons was the immediate fruit of this victory; it opened its gates to the Victors the day after the battle. The French General then advanced with little opposition into the heart of the Netherlands, and entered the City of Brussels on the 14th of November. After staying there a few days to refresh his troops, and to remodel the government (in doing which he exhibited proofs of great condescension and moderation), he marched forward, and on the 26th inst. encamped at Waroux, a village situate 2 short leagues from Liege, to the West. . . . On the 27th the Austrian General Staray, who was at the head of a strong body of Imperialists, resolved to make a vigorous stand in defence of the City. . . .

About noon a Cannon from the Citadel was fired as a signal to the Imperial troops still in Town to join their Companions in arms, who were already in array on the extensive plain that lay between the French and Liege. We saw with awe these troops defiling along the ramparts near our College in order and silence, and not long after a tremendous Cannonade announced that the battle had begun. This continued without interruption for some hours; the noise then sensibly increased, and of course approached us, and as it now grew dusk, we could distinctly see from the windows of our Dormitories, the reflected flash of every gun that was fired; but we were screened from danger by the high grounds which lay between us and the enemy. Towards night the issue of the battle was no longer doubtful. General Staray was severely wounded and carried off the field, and his troops gave way; they retired however in good order, effected their retreat over the Meuse during the night without great loss, and abandoned the city to the victors.

The French General Dumourier, to prevent pillage and bloodshed, had the condescension to bivouac on the field of battle, and would not allow his troops to enter Liege till the following day (Nov. 28th) about noon. He *of course* took up his quarters in the Episcopal Palace, where the Prince Bishop thought it not prudent to abide his coming. With the chief of his nobility and clergy he had retired to Mentz, and the Liegeois Revolutionists, who had been expelled by the Imperialists, now returned in triumph with the French.

Our own MSS. give us no details at all of this local history. Mother Aloysia Austin merely states that on the 28th of November, 1792, the French entered the town about noon. She then proceeds:

We were all under the greatest Alarms, dreading the consequences which we had reason to expect from their hatred of Religious Persons would ensue. Our only hope was, that being English, and England not having yet declared war with them, they might afford us some Protection. But a couple of Hours after their arrival in Town, 60 of them came with an order to be lodged at our Convent; their Captain was furious, and insisted upon a Lodging being immediately given them, saying otherwise they would force open the Convent Doors. The Out Sister conducted them to the Out-quarters, and gave them the large Dining Room, and Speak house joining to it, to lodge in, and she got them as soon as possible as much Victuals and Drink as they wished to have, in order to keep them quiet. They wanted to have brought 7 or 8 Horses, and tho' we assured them we had no place for them, they still persisted and insisted upon our taking care to provide a Stable for them, till we sent to the General's Quarters and received orders for them to be sent elsewhere, as no one, they said, who lodged to the number of 40 men, were obliged to take their Horses. These 60 Men remained 3 days with us, during which time, we furnished them with as much Bread, Beer, &c., as they desired. We made application to have them removed, and begged a *Sauve Garde* of General Dumourier. At the end of 3 days we obtained our request—the 60 Soldiers were withdrawn, and 4 Men with a Corporal was sent us for our *Sauve Garde*. These Soldiers were regularly changed 3 times a Day, sometimes we had French, sometimes Germans or Liegeois. This went on for 3 weeks or a Month, and notwithstanding the great variety we had during all this time, none of them ever took to the value of a Farthing out of our Quarter, and they all behaved very civilly to us. But finding we might be exposed to great Inconvenience from this frequent change, we petitioned to have a fixed Guard, which by the intercession of General Dampierre and his aide-de-camp (with whom Mr. Clifton had made acquaintance) was granted. They chose 5 Men out of the regular Troops and sent them to us. We made it a point to be very kind to them, and they were on all Occasions very attentive and careful of us during the whole time they remained in Town. The Day after the French arrived, an Order was sent to us in the Evening to provide 1000 Loaves of Bread, which were to be carried next Day to the place appointed, and this under a great penalty. We represented the impossibility of our executing this Order, and that we were Strangers in the Country, and we endeavoured to get friends among the Patriots, who might intercede to have the number at least diminished, but all in vain. We then employed some Bakers in Town, furnished them with the Corn, and got them done. On the 2nd of Dec. there came a 2nd Order at 8 o'clock at Night for 2000 more Loaves, which under the same penalty were to be done for the next Night. Notwithstanding all our endeavours to obtain that the number might be lessened, we were obliged to comply with this as well as the former, the only favour they granted us was to prolong the time in which they were to be done, as it was quite impossible to have them done in the time they had fixed. Some Days after this, they came to demand of us Bedding for the Hospital which they had made at the Monastery of Monks at St. Laurence's.¹ They wanted

¹ A Benedictine Abbey.

Matrasses, Straw Beds, Sheets and Blankets, of each of which we sent them a pretty large quantity. They then came and demanded to enter the Convent to examine our Oven, to see if they could not bake Bread in it for the Soldiers as they did in several other Convents. We took them to it through the cloisters, kitchen, &c., taking care they should not know there was a Door out of the Lane, which led to it. They therefore saw it would be very inconvenient. We also represented that it was only large enough to bake what we wanted for our own use. This Difficulty, they said, might be obviated by baking at different times of the Day and Night—the inconvenience of the situation appeared to be their greatest Objection, and made them desist from troubling us any more on that subject. We had frequent assurances of their Protection, and that we should not be molested, yet we were frequently threatened with having to lodge 40 or 50 Soldiers. Once they said they would send us 200, but our *Sauve Garde* always prevented this by sending them away, as they were empowered to do. They began to seize the effects of the Convents and different Persons in Town, the Church Plate, &c. We were told not to fear, for that we were to be exempted from anything of this kind. However we heard that they talked of coming to weigh our Church Plate, the greatest part of which we had concealed in a little garret in the Old School. They even went to a Silver-smith's to borrow his weights to this effect, but they did not execute this. Then they talked of making us change our Dress, and had frequently spoken of it in their Assemblies, and we were told that some of our best Friends, who had befriended us on other occasions, saw no difficulty in this. One of the Patriots spoke to us of it, and we made the greatest Opposition to anything of the sort. Infine, notwithstanding all their promises, we lived in continual Alarms and fears. From the Day of their Arrival in Town, we kept the Outportal Doors shut, but we sang High Mass and the Office, and rang our Bells as usual. On Xmas Night we did not sing Matins, but said them, and had a Low Mass at which our *Sauve Garde* assisted, one on each side of the Priest, and the Corporal at the Rails. The other two guarded the Portal for fear anyone might attempt to come in. On St. Stephen's Day we left off singing Mass or any part of the Office, as also ringing the Church Bell, so that from that Day we rang the Cloister Bell for Mass and every other Duty, and on Sundays and Holidays we had a low Mass at 9½, instead of High Mass. ¹The English having declared war with France, they now began to treat some of the English in Town ill which made us more apprehensive.

On the 6th Jan. 1793, there came a Commissary and another Person with a written Order to visit the House and put seals on all our Effects, Papers, &c. We told them of the Exemption which had been promised us from anything of this nature, and sent for our *Sauve Garde*, who disputed their Authority, but all to no purpose. They insisted upon having the Doors opened, and coming in immediately. In vain we begged a short reprieve of an Hour or half that space, in order to acquaint the Superior and Community, and reconcile them a little to this Disagree-

¹ This is a little premature, as England did not declare war until February 1st.

able Circumstance, alleging that the Surprise might hurt several of them essentially, but they would hear nothing, and we were obliged to go and acquaint Reverend Mother and the Community who were all at Dinner. It is not well possible to describe the Distress and Alarm which this occasioned. In the Interim, Mr. Clifton went to them, and prevailed with them, before they entered the Convent, to go first with him to the Commissary who had given this Order. In the meantime all the Nuns went to the Choir to pray. Mr. Clifton soon returned, and said the Commissary pretended he had made a mistake in sending them to our Convent, which he reflected had been excluded from anything of this nature. This last affair raised new Alarms in us, and we plainly saw there was no dependence on their promises, however we remained pretty quiet during the rest of the time they stayed in Town.

Father John Laurenson's narrative must now be resumed. After relating the troubles of the convent with fewer details than in Mother Aloysia Austin's MS., and given some proofs of the lawlessness of the French soldiers, he writes :

As the windows of our College overlooked the Orchard of the Convent of Poor Clares, which the Nuns had prudently quitted, and which in consequence had been occupied by a body of Sans-culottes, we were eye witnesses to many of their feats. Among others we one day saw them firing with ball cartridges for their improvement in gunnery at an image of the Blessed Virgin, which as a butt or target they had hung by the neck from a tree at the extremity of the orchard. Every day was signalized by some new outrage, and the King of France having been guillotined on the 21st January 1793, and war being declared against England on the 1st of February of this year, these events added much to the lawless rapacity and ferocity of the Republicans, and of their worthy associates the Liégeois Patriots, and rendered the situation of every man of worth and property extremely precarious and hazardous.

The French army reinforced by new levies, now advanced further into Germany, opened the Siege of Maestricht, and carried it on with great vigour for some time.

We now return to the convent MS.

The Siege of Maestricht began in February, and it was not raised till the 1st or 2nd of March. On the 1st a battle was fought at Aix la Chapelle, in which the French were defeated. There appeared a special providence of God in this affair, for the French thinking the Austrians to be much more numerous than they really were, seemed seized with a panic fright and fled as fast as they could. The Austrians entered Liege about 6 o'clock in the evening the 5th of March, upon which occasion all the Bells in the Town were rung, and we rang ours for the first

time since St. Stephen's Day. It is impossible to conceive the joy which each of us felt to see ourselves delivered from these enemies of religion, peace and tranquillity. They had determined on a pillage that night had they remained in Town, but Heaven protected us, for they might undoubtedly have effectuated their wicked Design if they had made an effort, the number of the Austrians being too small to have defended the place. Upon the 18th of the same Month, they were just upon the point of returning again, but Almighty God preserved us. Most Persons both at Liege and Maestricht thought they were greatly indebted to the Intercession of our Bd. Lady for this (I may truly call it) miraculous Delivery. The people of Liege are particularly devoted to her. We began to ring our bells and sing Mass for the first time on Sunday the 10th of March, and from that time went on as usual. Prince Coburg, who was the General Commander of the Imperial Troops, demanded a very considerable Sum of Money for the Ransom of the Town and Country of Liege, to pay which the States were obliged to take up Money at Interest. The Convents and Chapters were expected to advance Money on this Occasion, we therefore placed in their Hands ff 1000 which was to the value of £100 at 5 per Cent., but luckily we sold it out (with small loss) at the end of the year, 2 or 3 months before we left Liege. The Prince did not return till Easter, and he forbade any illuminations to be made on account of the expense. Soon after, one morning at 8 o'clock, the Secretary of the Synod accompanied by a Commissioner came and demanded to enter the Convent immediately, and to have the Chapter assembled in order that the Superior and Community should make a Declaration to them, that they had no Books nor Papers against the Prince or States, or which might favour a Revolution, as they said they should be satisfied with this from us, though in other Convents they had made the visit and examined their Books and Papers. Being sensible of the Alarm it must cause in the Community to ring to Chapter at that time of the Morning, when Mass was just upon the point of beginning, we begged these Gentlemen to defer their Visit, but we could not obtain our request. It is not well possible to describe how much everybody was alarmed, most thought that the French were returned, and they all seemed quite terrified till they were informed what the matter was. The Prince, upon being told that they had been at our Convent, expressed great Concern, and said he meant that we should have been exempted from the general Order.

This is the last event chronicled for 1793. Two accounts must be given of the preliminaries for the departure, the first from our own MS. and the second from Father John Laurenson's.

In January 1794 Mr. Clifton began to be apprehensive that the French would shortly return to Liege, and he foresaw that if we deferred till such time as the Danger visibly appeared, that we should not only be obliged to pay a considerable sum for Boats &c. in order to transport our numerous Community and Effects, but that we should also find it very hard to get them for any price, when the greatest

part of the Town would be trying to make their escape as well as ourselves. He therefore wished us to engage Boats to be in readiness for our Orders, which we accordingly did of our Coal-Merchant, who had one or two large Barges with which he used to trade with Holland, and in which we could go down to Rotterdam. For these same reasons Mr. Clifton advised us to take a house at Maestricht, where we might retire in case of necessity, to which we consented, and he went and took a very large House unfurnished, on the 23rd of January. We agreed to pay 6 guineas a month for it for 3 months, and we made the bargain that we were free at the end of this Term, either to give it up, or to keep it 3 or 6 months longer as we pleased. He was then desirous we should, for greater security, send some of our most valuable things there, and for this end we begged leave of the Prince to send off some of our effects. He made great objections, as he said there was no necessity, there being no Danger, and that it might alarm the People of the Town, but at last with much difficulty he consented to repeated Entreaties which Mr. Clifton made to him upon this subject, but desired we should do it as privately as we could. On the 26th of the same Month we sent off our most valuable things, as our Church plate and best Ornaments, our Registers and Papers belonging to our Foundations, Rents, &c. It was impossible for us to send off such a quantity of things without the people knowing it, and in a very short space it was spread all over the Town. Every Body blamed our proceedings as an effect of Folly and groundless Fears, as no one then apprehended any danger. The Prince was condemned for giving his Consent, and we were a Subject of Conversation and ridicule even amongst our best Friends. However many could not help being alarmed, and supposed we must have some very particular reasons unknown to them, which was the cause of our Proceedings. They came to us to enquire if we had not some private intelligence from the Armies, and made so much disturbance in Town, that the People declared, that if we sent off any more of our Goods, they would seize them, and if we offered to go ourselves, they would stop us. This made so much noise, that the Commander of the Imperialists sent an Officer to Town to know the cause of our Proceedings which had raised such alarms. The Prince sent the Secretary to the Synod with an Order that we should send no more of our things out of the House, nor think of moving ourselves, assuring us that there was not the least Danger, and that in case there should be any, he would take care to inform us in due time. All this made our situation very uncomfortable, we had reason to fear something would happen, as Mr. Clifton constantly insisted that we should have to move sooner or later, and he continued from time to time to make application for leave to send more of our moveables to Maestricht, but he could not obtain it. He was laughed at, and blamed by every Body. Our Friends were continually representing to us the folly of this Scheme, and that we were putting ourselves to great Expense, and giving ourselves great Pain and Uneasiness without any cause, for that the French would never more come to Liege. This was the most general opinion, and the most virtuous and prudent Persons blamed us. We continued in this Situation till the end of May.

When we sent off our Effects to Maestricht, we got Mr. Berlize and his Servant Man to go and live in the House we had hired to take care of our Goods. The 23rd of April, the 3 Months being expired, we agreed to engage the House for 3 Months longer.

Father John Laurenson gives much the same account of the hiring of the house at Maestricht, the sending of the Church plate, &c., but his description of the alarm in the town is more graphic. He writes :

The Prince was blamed for giving his consent, and the nuns and their Director were bantered for what were generally deemed, at that time, their groundless apprehensions and excessive precautions. Some however there were who attached considerable importance to those precautions, and felt great anxiety in consequence, as they attributed them to some extraordinary motives unknown to the public. What caused or strengthened this anxiety was the oracular tone with which Mr. Clifton, upon all occasions expressed his conviction of impending dangers ; and still more the whispered report of some supernatural communication of an unfavourable kind having been made to one of that religious community. Hence their proceedings became the subject of common conversation, and caused much uneasiness ; the townsfolks threatened to seize whatever goods the nuns should send off in future, and the Prince, induced by the Commander of the Imperial troops then quartered at Liege, despatched the secretary of the Synod to revoke the permission which he had granted.

Thus confidence was in great measure restored, Mr. Clifton was deemed an Augur of ills, and the nuns deluded Visionaries, and it was now admitted on all sides, as an unquestionable truth, that the regicide French would never more penetrate as far as Liege. . . . Early in the month of May the republican General, rallying his troops, crossed the Sambre in 3 divisions, invested Charleroi, and advanced to Gosselies, a village in the County of Namur. The certain intelligence of this sudden inroad which placed the French between the Allies and Liege arrived about the middle of May, and spread confusion through the whole principality.

The convent MS. continues :

Towards the end of May, the French made great progress in the Low Countries, and about the 25th and 26th the people of Liege began to apprehend that in a short time they would arrive there. The Town was in the greatest Alarms, numberless Persons of all conditions quitted it, and among the rest, the Gentlemen of the Academy. Immediate danger was apprehended, and yet it was with great difficulty we obtained the Prince's permission to move to Maestricht with the rest of our effects. We proposed this place before any other, as being so near Liege, we might easily return, in case things took a favourable Turn, and also because we were under the Authority of the Prince of Liege, whose spiritual

jurisdiction extends to that place. We ordered the Boats that we had engaged from the month of Janry. to be in readiness at a very short warning, we packed up our Books, Linen, &c., all which we took with us, as also the greatest part of our Bedsteads and Bedding. Part of the Corn that we had in the House we sold, and the rest, together with what was ground, we took to Maestricht, also our Wine and Bacon, so that we left no provisions behind us, but a Brewing of Beer, and a large quantity of Coals and Firing, as we had just got in the chief part of our provision for the Year. Our Organ, Great Clock, a considerable quantity of Furniture, the Choir hangings, &c., we were obliged to leave behind. We were most concerned at not being able to take our large Tabernacle, and great Altar Stone, but there was no possibility of removing the latter, as it was half as large as the Altar. We took the little one belonging to the Chapel, and one we had for a portable Altar which we had got for the use of the Infirmary, having some time before obtained leave to have Mass said there for the sick, or in the work room, in case of necessity. We wished to get off as privately as possible, and time pressed. We kept the day of our Departure secret, which we fixed to be the 29th of May, the Feast of the Ascension that year. We had taken the precaution, some time before, to beg the Parents who had Children under our care (excepting the English) to remove them, or to appoint a place in Town where we might send them in case of necessity. We had then about 50 Pensioners, and should have had a much greater number, but we had for some time declined taking any more. We sent them all to the places which had been appointed, except 25 whom we took to Maestricht. The whole House during that Night was one universal scene of Confusion and Distress, some packing up till the last moment, others who had never supposed things would end so seriously, now felt it doubly. It is more easy to conceive than express the affliction we all felt to be obliged to quit our Dear Convent. We said Matins in the Choir at 10 o'clock on the Eve of the Ascension, and had Mass said a little after Midnight, at which we all communicated. It was judged best that we should go off as soon as it was light, as we were rather apprehensive that the people might rise and try to prevent us. On the same account we applied to the Prince for a Guard, but he declined granting it, tho' at the same time he gave us leave to beg the favour of the French General of the Emigrés, who then guarded part of the Town, to let some of his Officers be upon the watch to prevent any bustle or Disturbance. Accordingly the General gave orders to the Officers to guard the Avroy where we were to pass in going to the Boats. They were so obliging as to watch all night, so as to be ready when we set out. As we had no suspicion, till a few Days beforehand of our being so soon obliged to depart, there were a considerable quantity of Consecrated Hosts remaining, so we begged the Curate to come after we were gone and carry them in the Ciborium, which we had left, to St. Christopher's Church, which he did. We were not able throughout the Town, to get Horses for two Coaches to carry the Infirm who were not able to walk as far as the Boats which lay at some distance. At last we borrowed them of a lady of our acquaintance.

After Mass, having taken what little refreshment we could get, we were all



OLD GATEWAY.

desired to repair to the cloister facing the inclosure Door. Here we waited some time in deep silence and dreadful suspense. At length the Door opened; Mr. Clifton appeared, and desired us all to follow him. Each Nun had been provided with a piece of black Stuff about a yard in width and $3\frac{1}{2}$ in length, like the Falles which the common people about Liege wear over their heads. This was to serve all purposes, preserving us from the rain, concealing our religious dress, and covering us like a veil. About 3 o'Clock in the morning, we set out 2 by 2 in deep silence, all crying most bitterly, many not having seen the Outside of the Inclosure door for many years, most of us went stumbling along, as our heavy thick "falles" were extremely inconvenient to us. At the outside of the Convent we met a few French Emigrants whom Mr. Clifton had engaged to accompany us to the water side, and all but 8 or 10 persons walked to the Boats, each one carrying her own little packet, which consisted of night clothes, Breviary, and such like things. The French Gentlemen who attended us, and seemed much affected by this moving scene, insisted on carrying them for us. It was a very wet morning. When we arrived at the River side, we were much disappointed, for instead of a large barge which the Coal merchant had always promised us, and in which he said we should find every necessary accommodation, and would hold over 100 Persons, we found nothing but a Coal Boat covered with a few boards, so filthy and so small that only half of us could get into it. He was then obliged to unload part of our goods out of another Boat, and accommodate it as well as he could, so that we were detained there till 6 o'Clock. We carried with us Ham, cold meat, &c., that we might have some refreshment before we arrived at Maestricht, as we were all much spent and fatigued, what with Concern, and want of rest, as some of us had not been in Bed for some Nights.

We arrived at Maestricht about 1 O'Clock; it rained very hard, and we hired Coaches to go to the House we had taken, but when we arrived there, we had not chairs to sit down upon, nor could we get the Bedding out of the Boats that Night, so that we sat or lay down upon the Floor. Mr. Berlize and his Servant were there expecting us, and immediately prepared a Dinner, but having no idea of our number, most of us dined that day at a 2nd Table, upon what we could get. Night came on, and as they could not bring much baggage from the Boats that day, and that what they did bring was soaked with the Rain, some of us slept on Chairs, and many on the floor with a bundle under our head. The next day, upon visiting the different parts of our new dwelling, we found that the house, tho' too small for our number was most beautifully situated and just under the ramparts. We had a small Garden, at the bottom of which was a Bosquet full of thick shrubby trees and little serpentine walks. The Garden wall, at the bottom of this spot joined the ramparts, and just at that place there was a sentinel day and night, and another close at the outside of the same wall, where there was a Gunpowder Magazine. This Bosquet was so full of singing Birds, that whenever we wish to express how sweetly Birds sing anywhere, it is become proverbial among us to say, "it reminds me of Maestricht." The weather grew intensely hot, and being very much crowded, we were glad at night to get into the open Garden

to sleep. On the opposite side of the street was a House that served for Barracks, and the Soldiers were a great constraint to us. The only Room we could use for a Chapel was towards the Street, and we could not even sing a Tantum ergo without having all these Soldiers ranged before the House listening to us.

The House was very large, but we being so numerous, several of the Nuns lodged in the cockloft, to which they could ascend only by a steep ladder. Most of them during the time we remained there lay on the Floor, with a Mattrass or Feather Bed. We had daily two or three Masses. We rose at 5 o'clock, made our Meditation, and said Matins together, as also the greatest part of the Office. We had sometimes leave to say the Hours to ourselves, as the Chapel was very small for such a number, and the weather was very hot ; but we said Compline and made our evening Meditation at 5 o'Clock as usual. Soon after our arrival, upon report of things going better, several Persons returned to Liege, and would gladly have persuaded us to do the same, but we were determined not to return till we could have some security of things taking such a favourable turn, that there was no risk of our being again obliged to leave the place. In the Interim we endeavoured to procure the Passports which would be necessary for us to go through Holland. The Princess of Orange answered the letter written to her for this purpose, in the most obliging terms, as did likewise the English Ambassador at the Hague and at Bruxelles. From the favourable accounts we had, some of us still entertained hopes of returning to our dear Convent, but in a short time things began to grow worse, and we sent to Liege for our Great Clock, Hangings of the Choir, and the best of our Furniture, which we had been obliged to leave behind us, but the People seemed very unwilling to send them, and deferred from time to time. We had left two Maid Servants, a Man, and a french Gentleman to take care of the House and Out Quarters, but they could not prevent Persons from coming in and taking several things out of the House, and two or three Servants who were to leave the House the same day we did, took several things with them. We lived at a great expense in Maestricht, paying almost double price for everything, as the Town was very full of People from all parts, nor should we have been able to get a house at any price had we not taken one beforehand.

Towards the end of June, the French advanced rapidly. The People from Liege returned to Maestricht, and they began to place cannon on the Ramparts, and put it into a situation of Defence. We then thought it high time to set off for Rotterdam. Before we left Liege we had engaged a House at Ruremonde, to rest ourselves there for a few days ; we had also kept the Boats that conveyed us from Liege in readiness for our Orders. We wished to have been better accommodated and to have got others, but there was no possibility of succeeding. The Man of whom we had them promised to send a large one up with our Effects from Liege, and we were in daily expectation of its arrival, but finding it did not come, and that we had now got all the Passports necessary, excepting that of the Prince of Liege, who still persisted in making a difficulty to let us go any further, we begged Lady Clifford, a particular friend of his, and whose Daughter was then a Novice in our Community, to obtain this favour of him for us. She complied

with our request and received the following Billet from him, which will plainly show how much averse he was to our removal :

“ Madame, En réponse à la lettre que vous avez bien voulu m’écrire sous la date du 30 coulé, (June) je saisis avec plaisir l’occasion de pouvoir vous obliger en vous envoyant la Passe-porte que vous m’avez demandé pour les Dames Anglaises. Mon intention est cependant qu’elles n’en fassent usage que dans le moment d’une nécessité absolue. Je vous prie unssi, Madame, de vouloir leur faire connoître, que je ne l’accorde que sous l’expresse condition qu’elles devraient rentrer dans leur couvent ici lorsque je le jugerai convenable, sous l’obéissance qu’elles me doivent.”

This letter was written and signed by his own hand, and dated 3rd or 4th of July. Things continued growing daily worse, and we fixed the 8th of the same month for our Departure. Nine of our Pensioners left us at Maestricht. When we quitted it, we were in number 75 Persons¹—32 professed Nuns, 1 Novice, 2 Clergesses, 12 professed Lay-sisters, and 2 Novices, 1 Boarder, 16 Pensioners, Mr. Clifton, a French Emigré Priest, (Father Gervais Genin) and the Gentleman who had taken care of our House at Maestricht.

We left at 4 o’Clock in the Morning on the 8th of July, after having been there 5 weeks and 4 days. We left this delightful spot to take up our residence in the same old Coal Boats, having spent the preceding night in the Garden, or sitting on the floor, the furniture being sent to the Boats the day before. During our stay at Maestricht the Boats had been partly covered with old Carpets, &c., &c., and remained laden in the same station on the River during that period, nothing being taken out which was not absolutely necessary.

The term for our taking the House not being expired till the 23rd, we left it till then to the Gentlemen of the Academy.

As the Boats lay at some distance from the House, we hired 2 Coaches for the Sick and Infirm, the rest walked. We expected to have reached Ruremonde that Night, but the waters being very low, and the Boats heavy laden, we did not arrive there till 12 o’Clock next Day, so that we passed that night in the Boats, but we had no place to lie down. Having been up the night before we were very much fatigued, and it had been a very hot Day. When we got to Ruremonde, the Gentlemen went to the Town to get some carriages to convey us to the House which we had hired, but could only procure one covered Cart. They did not return to us till 2 o’Clock, and we had been from 12 exposed to the broiling sun. We had a very long walk to the House, and when we arrived, had not a chair to sit down upon, as it was quite unfurnished. A Priest to whom the House belonged had the Charity to come and bring us a little Rhemish Wine to refresh us. We had great difficulty to get Carts to bring our Bedding, Chairs, &c., from the Boats. We proposed, as I have already said, spending a few Days here to rest ourselves, we also hoped the other large Boat which had been promised us, and another with our

¹ Miss Catherine Meade, a sister of Mother Mechtilda and Miss Angélique Molliette were both with the community all through its wanderings. Both had entered the Noviceship, but failed for want of health. There were also two maid-servants, Marie Jeanne Moërs and Poncette Delraye, and two men-servants are mentioned later on. The boarder was a Miss Strickland.

goods from Liege would shortly arrive, as we were in daily expectation of them, but we had not been $\frac{1}{2}$ an Hour in the House, before we were swarmed with Fleas—the quantity we caught is hardly credible. This is the more surprising, as the House appeared to be very neat and clean, and had been lately white-washed. It was a roomy large House, almost like a Convent. We got victuals from a Cook's shop, and put the Mattrasses which we got from the Boats on the Floor, but we could rest neither Night nor Day on account of the Fleas. We found upon enquiry that this place had been a Military Academy, and lately a Hospital for the Soldiers, which we supposed must have been the cause of this quantity of Vermine. We determined to set out again, being apprehensive that some of the Nuns would get a Fever, they were bitten to such an excess with these fleas, which we did not get rid of till we arrived in London. From this time we always called this place the Flea House. Friday the 11th, about 10 o'Clock at night we returned to our Boats. We sailed next morning, and in the evening arrived at Venlo. The Boats stopped a little before the Town, at a small Distance from a village where there was a Catholic Church. We had sent to an Inn for Provisions, and got out of our Boats and eat our Suppers at the side of a very pleasant Hill where we dined and supped during our stay in this place, which was till our other Boats arrived, on Monday the 14th. The Day after our arrival here, being Sunday the 13th, we all went to Mass in the Village with our Falles over our shoulders like cloaks, and our veils down. The place where our Boats lay was very retired, so that we frequently walked out, which was a great relaxation to us. Sunday Afternoon we had a violent Storm, and we were all wet, for the Rain poured into the Boats, yet we none of us caught cold, nor were we sick with the fatigue and getting little or no rest for so many nights. After leaving Venlo we passed through part of Prussian Guelderland, and during all our journey on the River, we were continually teased with the different *Commis* who came to receive the Duty or Toll, and were sometimes very troublesome. In one place Mr. Clifton and Mr. Berlize went to the Commis' House to pay the duty, that we might not be molested with a visit. The Dutchman seemed to take it very politely, showed them every civility imaginable, and insisted so warmly on their taking some wine, that they found it impossible to refuse. The wine came; each took a glass; the Dutchman finished the Bottle, and then made them pay for it. As the water was very low, our Boats frequently scratched against the bottom of the river to our great annoyance and danger. They were chained together at one end, but the current sometimes parted them to the distance of some feet, and sometimes it was found necessary to part them. When we got the other Boats we put down Mattrasses to sleep upon them in the Night. Some slept on packets of Bedding which were put close together. We expected to be at Rotterdam in 4 or 5 Days when we first left Maestricht, but the waters being very low, and having 5 Boats all very heavy laden, we advanced very slowly, and in some places we had great difficulty to get on at all, even with the help of Horses which were very hard to be got. We had only sufficient to drag two of the Boats at once, so that when they had advanced a little, they used to untie them, and we had to wait till the Horses

dragged up the others. We left Venlo on Sunday the 14th at 4 in the Afternoon, and arrived at Mouch upon the 16th. We got out of the Boats into some retired place to eat our Dinners and Suppers, after which we generally took a walk at Mouch which was a small village. The Curate and a number of his Parishioners came to look at us, as it was an extraordinary thing to see religious Persons in their Habits in those parts. The Gentlemen who were with us tried to persuade them to withdraw, but they did not seem to see any impropriety in it, and answered in a very rude manner, so that we were obliged to return into our Boats, and wait till they retired, and then got out, eat our Suppers and took our walk.

Next Day about 2 o'Clock we arrived at a Village called Mæghen, and we got out of our Boats at a little distance. Soon after a very respectable Ecclesiastic came towards us, accompanied by two French Emigrés. He could not speak a word of French which we were very sorry for. Mr. Clifton conversed with him in Latin. He thought we were some poor Nuns who did not know where to go, and he came to offer us his House to rest and refresh ourselves. A day or two before he had lodged the Poor Clares from Liege, whom we had met, with several other Communities as we came up the River. He told us we were happy in suffering for so good a Cause, and he repeated several sentences out of Scripture and the Psalms to animate and encourage us under our Trials. The Gentlemen who accompanied him told us that the People in those parts had the highest opinion of his sanctity, and esteemed him as a second Benedict Labre, by which name they generally called him. He appeared rather young, but had such an air of Sanctity, so recollected and emaciated, that his appearance was quite striking. We much regretted the not being able to converse with him, but we recommended ourselves to his prayers, and thought ourselves happy to have met this holy Man whose comportment edified us much. One Day not being able to proceed on account of the lowness of the Water, all those who were not lame, as many were with fatigue, and so much want of rest, which occasioned violent inflammation in their Legs, went out to walk. They insensibly divided into 2 Companies. One set met with an old Curate who talked nothing but Latin to them, lost their road and got into a wood. For more than half an hour, we were terribly alarmed about them.

One Day that we had taken a long walk, and were returned to the Boats, just ready to set off, we missed 3 or 4 of the Nuns and 3 of the Pensioners, upon which we went in search of them. They had lost themselves in a Wood and could not find their way out. They were much alarmed, and as much rejoiced when they heard Mr. Clifton's voice calling after them. The 17th at Night we went out of the Boats for the last time, as we could meet with no convenient places to land on after this. That Night we walked in a Clover field. Some time after we had been there, 2 or 3 men came and demanded to be paid for our having, as they said, spoiled their Clover. To content them, we gave them $\frac{1}{2}$ a Crown, or rather more. When we were all going to Bed, they returned, and we made no doubt that it was for more Money, but it was to return what they had taken. They said they came

by their Master's orders, who was much displeased with them, and made us welcome to walk there again, if we had a mind. On the 19th we arrived at Wackam, and on the 20th at Dortrecht at 5½ in the morning. It was Sunday, but we did not go out to Mass, as it was judged better we should not, fearing we might be mobbed. It was 200 years since Religious in their Habits had been seen here, and the Curiosity of the People of the Town was so great, that numbers of them came out in pleasure boats, and sailed several times round us to stare at us. We remained there that Day, and set out at Night. We arrived at Rotterdam on the 22nd at 7 o'Clock in the morning. At all the places as we came up the River, they made us pay a most extravagant price for our Provisions, every place being full of Strangers from Brabant, the Low Countries, &c. We met with several Persons of our acquaintance from Liege, some were obliged to remain in their Boats, not being able to get Lodgings.

In coming up to Rotterdam, we met a floating Camp, which is looked on as a great Curiosity. It was unsawed wood, all fastened together, of an immense length, and pretty broad; empty barrels were fastened to it, and it was carried down the river with the Current. Upon it were small Houses or Tents which contained between 3 and 400 persons. They exercised all sorts of trades. There was a Butcher's Shop which we saw. Our Gentlemen took a little Boat and went upon it, and spoke to the Captain, who told them that they were come from the Upper part of Germany and were going to Cologne, and that the wood was to build Ships with. We met one or two smaller ones of the same sort.

The Day we arrived at Rotterdam, the Nuns from Princenhoff in Bruges¹ hearing of our arrival, two of them came to see us. They were dressed in secular, and we liked their Dress so well, that finding we must also change our dress before we came to England, we took the model of ours from theirs. It consisted of a black Gown, with a large Cape and long sleeves, and buttoned down before, a muslin double handkerchief, a muslin cap with a double border and a black ribbon, also a large black silk hood which afterwards we always wore in the Choir. The Laysisters had a black and white cotton Gown, and their Caps had but one border. The morning after our arrival, we sent for stuffs and Mantua-makers to get them done as soon as possible.

Here it will be well to introduce a passage from Mother Agatha's MS. She interrupts her account of the life at Holme Hall to enlarge upon this dress which she says was neither Secular nor Religious. She says the Cape was like that generally worn by Coachmen in bad weather. After giving the same particulars of the dress as those mentioned above, she continues :

The reason for adopting so singular a Costume, was the following. In the hurry and distress in which we left Liege, we did not reflect that in proceeding through Holland, we ran great risk of being molested, insulted, and perhaps stopped,

¹ Now at Taunton.

if we travelled in our Religious Dress, and yet we actually reached Rotterdam wearing no other. Some persons there informed us that we were the first who had ventured to do so for above 200 years. But Divine Providence took care of us, and though while we lay in our Barges weather-bound thousands came to stare at us, as at wild beasts exposed for Shew, we received no insult. The Religious of the Convent of Princenhoff in Bruges were just then arrived at Rotterdam, flying like ourselves from the french Revolutionists. Mrs. Plowden, one of these Ladies kindly paid us a visit on our boats. After mutual Condolence, which such an interview under such circumstances must necessarily have occasioned, our amiable Visitor said to our Superior, "Indeed, Reverend Mother, I think you are very venturesome to come hither in your Religious habit." We therefore agreed as well as time and distressful circumstances would permit, to adopt the dress which Mrs. Plowden wore; but our imitation was indeed very imperfect, not to say almost ridiculous. We were compelled, being so extremely straitened for time, to hire 4 or 5 Dutch Mantua makers, who could not understand one word of french, nor could any one among us speak a word of Dutch. These women, therefore, taking measure of us over our habits, accoutured us in the Costume I spoke of above.

To return to the long narrative :

We had always intended to take a House in this Town and to stay here 10 Days or a Fortnight, but such Crowds of People had flocked there from all parts, that there was no possibility of getting any lodgings. We flattered ourselves we should be able to get the House that the Bruges Nuns had in the Country, as they proposed setting off for England the next Day, but we did not succeed. Our Boats lay just off the Town Gates, and the People came in crowds to look at us. We hoped to be free from this disagreeable Circumstance when the Town Gates were shut, but they continued to stay very late at night, and come again at 4 o'Clock in the morning. An English Tradesman who lived there, and had been at Liege, hearing of our arrival, came immediately to see us. He told us of a Vessel which was going to sail for England in a few Days, and it would be just the thing for us, as there were no other Passengers, and it would be quite large enough for us, and our Effects also. We were at first very adverse to this proposition, unless the Captain would agree to wait a few Days, for we had still some hopes of getting a place either in the Town or Country, where we might rest ourselves a little, being all of us so fatigued with our long and tedious Journey, but all in vain. The Captain of the above mentioned Vessel, whose name was Semmes came to speak to us, and we agreed with him to take us and all our effects for 130 Guineas. He was bound for London. The name of the Ship was the *Smallbridge*.¹ There seemed a particular Providence in our having this Vessel. It had been a voyage to the Indies, and had received so much damage in returning home, the main Mast being

¹ The reader will remember Father Howard's prediction that the Community would cross over to England by a small bridge.

broken and part of the upper Deck carried away, that the Captain was obliged to put in at Rotterdam to get it repaired, and there he sold off his Cargo. He arrived the 29th of May, the Day we left Liege, and his Vessel was only then just finished and ready to set sail. We could not have met with a Captain who could have been more attentive and ready to oblige us than he was. He put himself to any inconvenience to accommodate us, and during our long voyage did everything in his power to render things as easy and agreeable as he could. The Sailors also were very civil and attentive to us, and what was surprising, we scarce ever heard an oath from any of them. A Day or two after our arrival, finding we could get no lodging, we wished to have our Boats go up the river a little into the Country where we might land and walk out, and not be exposed like a Puppet shew to the view of the whole Town. The Wind being very high, the Men who had care of the Boats made some difficulty, but we insisted upon it, and accordingly we set out. When we had advanced a very little way, the river was very rough, and the wind and tide against us. The Boatmen seemed to apprehend Danger, and we were all much frightened, expecting the Boat would be upset, and we endeavoured to go back. The Ship in which we were to embark lay near that place. We made up towards it, and finding we should be less exposed there than in the Boats, we determined to go aboard. Accordingly we did so, expecting to sail in 2 or 3 Days. While they were transporting our effects out of the Boats into the Ship, one of the Laysisters, Sister Magdalen Hargitt, who was helping out the Goods, was standing on the edge of two Boats that were fastened together. They untied them without her perceiving it, and she fell into the river between them. She laid hold of the end of a Carpet which was hanging out of the Boat, and another Sister caught hold of her Clothes, but not having strength to support her, let her go. The Captain who was at the top of the Mast, seeing it, being very nimble, jumped down, and drew her out of the water. We suffered much also from a very disagreeable circumstance, the want of clean linen. When we left Maestricht, we were supposed to reach Rotterdam in 5 or 6 Days, where we intended to have taken a House, and had our Boxes &c. brought there to take out what we wanted. We had each of us therefore taken only change of linen for once, nor did we dare send the dirty things to be washed, as our Stay there was so uncertain and depending upon the wind, so that most of us wore the same Linen for 6 weeks. When we went aboard the Ship, the Captain made a kind of Tent to separate us from the Sailors; it also prevented our being so much exposed to the view of the Town. We put down Mattresses, and several of us slept upon Deck during our stay at Rotterdam, and we constantly eat there during our voyage. The Captain gave up his Cabin. Reverend Mother and 8 or 9 more lodged in it. The rest of the Community slept in the place where the goods are stored. The Pensioners had the place where there were Beds for Passengers.

During our stay at Rotterdam, we received a letter from Lord Stourton, who in the kindest manner offered us his House at Holme for an Asylum, in case we had nothing better. He begged an immediate Answer, as he meant, if we accepted it, to get it repaired, and made ready to receive us. As we had reason to believe

from Letters we had received, that there was not only a House in London prepared for us, but also several in view for our settling in the Country, so that we might choose what suited us best when we arrived in Town, we begged his Lordship to allow us to defer giving an answer till we arrived in England, alleging for reason that we believed some of our Friends had prepared a place for us, and we could not say which would prove the most advantageous. An English Gentleman of the Town and a Merchant undertook to lay in provisions for us, as we thought, out of civility, but he asked 6 Guineas for the Commission, and the greatest part of his Biscuits were some months old, and so bad, that no one could eat them. Instead of white sea biscuits, they were sailors' brown ones. What with getting our clothes made, and getting in our Provisions, which consisted of Hams, Poultry, sea biscuits, Tea and sugar, we did not leave Rotterdam till the 29th of July about 4 in the afternoon, and arrived at Briel the next morning at 7 o'Clock, but the wind being contrary, we determined to return and go to Helvoetsluys. We set out, but the Pilot drove the Vessel into the Sands on the 31st, where we stuck, and only got out with the tide next day. To add to our fears, he told us that his Father had perished just in that very place where our Vessel lay, and so left us. There was a large American vessel riding at Anchor near us. One night the wind being high, their Anchor gave way, and the two Vessels knocked against each other. The rigging was damaged, but the Vessel stood. Their Captain, seeing Mr. Clifton on our Deck, probably took him for our Captain. He swore famously at him, and wished his head had been between the ships to break the blow.

We arrived at Helvoetsluys on the 2nd of August, and cast Anchor at a little Distance from the Town. The wind being against us, we could not put to sea, The Town was so full of People that provisions were both very scarce and extravagantly dear. We had only provided sufficient for 10 days, expecting to be in London in half that time. We suffered very much for want of Bread, as the brown Biscuits disagreed with several of the Nuns.

Meanwhile the Fathers of the Academy were detained at Briel by the same adverse wind that kept the Nuns at Helvoetsluys. Father John Laurenson writes :

On the 9th of August, the wind being still adverse, two of us took advantage of the delay which this occasioned, to walk over to Helvoetsluys, to visit our friends and relatives the English-Nuns, who, with very many others had been weather bound there since the beginning of the month. The distance between the two Towns is nearly two English miles, and the road from one to the other lies through a flat, sandy, and uninteresting country. The weather was favourable, and we arrived before noon at Helvoetsluys, which has not the usual cleanliness or neatness of Dutch towns. It is a dirty, crowded little fishing sea-port; but its harbour is excellent, from its depth, capaciousness and security. At the time of our visit, it was crowded and choked up with vessels of all descriptions, detained by westerly winds, which had prevailed for a longer time than any within the memory of man.

Our first visit upon our arrival was to Messrs. Charles Wright and Notley Young. . . . We next took a boat to visit the nuns, who were on board the Smallbridge. We found the generality of them better, than, considering the fatigues and hardships to which they had been so long exposed, we could have expected. Most of them, however, were wan, sallow and tanned. They seemed delighted to see us, conversed with us for a considerable time with cheerfulness, and related to us many of their adventures, among the rest their being almost devoured alive by myriads of fleas at Ruremonde, their nearly losing a laysister in getting from the boat to their ship at Rotterdam, and their being stranded, with imminent danger of foundering, in their passage from the Briel to Helvoetsluys. In our turn we communicated to them whatever events of our journey we thought would interest them. We experienced, during our interview, the mingled feelings of gladness to see them again, and of sorrow to find them in so forlorn a situation. We all, however, felt comfort in the reflection that our hardships would not probably be of long duration. After a cordial farewell, and mutual best wishes, we visitors were rowed ashore, and got back to the Briel before it was late.

There is no mention of this visit in the Nuns' manuscripts. These are filled mainly with their adventures, which were more numerous than would probably befall us in a journey round the world in these days.

One night whilst we lay at Anchor, a Collier's vessel fell foul of ours and broke the Cable in two. A day or two after, the Captain was determined to try to put to sea, tho' the wind was not very favourable. Accordingly we set out, but found the wind against us, and the Captain of an English Man of War sent after us to let us know that it was dangerous for us to go without the Convoy, as there had been some Ships lately taken by the French. We therefore returned, and put ourselves under the protection of the Convoy, which only waited for a fair wind in order to set sail. On the 12th at Noon they sent word that they were going to set out, though the wind was not very favourable, and our Captain seemed to fear we should be obliged to return. We were in all 7 Ships, viz. 4 Ships of War, the packet boat, and one Merchant Vessel. As soon as we got to sea, we cast anchor—our Pilot judged it to be in a very dangerous place, particularly as the wind was very high. Here we lay all Night, which indeed was a very blustering one, and tho' we had been very much tossed with high winds and bad weather during the time we lay at Helvoetsluys, and were most of us very sea sick, yet this last exceeded all the rest, and in the morning the Pilot and Captain seemed to think it very uncertain whether we should be able to put to sea or not. On the 13th, between 9 and 10 o'Clock, we saw the other Ships hoisting their sails and making preparations, but the wind was not yet favourable, and we much feared the being obliged to return into the Port. However, to our great satisfaction the Convoy put to sea, and the wind changed in our favour. This we attributed to the intercession of St. Francis Xavierius, for 3 of our laysisters got up very early that morning, and dipped a relic of this great Saint into the sea, and said a prayer in his Honour with great

confidence, earnestly petitioning him to obtain us a fair wind. As soon as we got into open sea, our Dutch Pilot left us. The next day we lost sight of all the ships of War; but the Merchant ship that set out with us was still in sight, and the Captain took it for his Pilot, as he had not been accustomed to this part of the sea, nor to direct the vessel himself. This was the 14th, the Eve of the Assumption. We had nothing on board but Ham and Chickens, so that we were obliged to eat Meat. The water was so bad, it was impossible to drink it, and I don't know what we should have done the greatest part of our voyage on the water, had we not brought with us from Liege a large provision of country wine, which we drank with water.

The following Day, the Assumption, we saw Land, and therefore Reverend Mother desired us to put on our secular clothes. It was remarkable that upon our Lord's Ascension we left our Convent, and upon our Lady's Assumption we were obliged to put off our Religious Habits. That morning the Merchant ship we had taken for our Pilot stuck in the sands in a very dangerous position. During the day we heard very loud Cannon for several hours, and several of us were a good deal alarmed, supposing it to be some engagement with the French.

On the 16th, at 3 o'Clock in the morning, we got to Gravesend. The Captain was very anxious to get a Pilot to conduct us up the river that evening, as he himself had never taken his Vessel further than Gravesend. He put out his flag, and let off one of his Cannons for this purpose, but no one came. At last he called to a fishing boat, and asked if they had anyone who could steer his Vessel, and how much they would ask to go to London. They answered twelve guineas. Upon hearing this extravagant demand, the Captain wished them good night. Some time before this we met some fishing boats, and bought of them a large quantity of small flat fish, which we eat boiled without any bread, but we all agreed we had not for a long time relished anything so much. They gave us also a barrel of fresh water, which was very acceptable.

On the 17th a Collier's ship again ran foul of our vessel. The Captain and Sailors were all hard at work upon Deck, and sent down the Cabin Boy to fetch something out of a little place where the Captain slept. He left a Candle on the bed which soon took fire. The Nuns who lodged in the Cabin just by, perceiving a great light through the top of the Door, and apprehending what the matter was, called Mr. Clifton, and told him the place was on fire. He went immediately, and found the Bed clothes in a flame, which he luckily succeeded in putting out. It was a most special providence of God that the fire was so soon discovered, for we should certainly have been blown up in a short time, as the Captain had a large quantity of powder very near. The Vessel which ran foul of ours did it no essential harm. Early that morning two English Commissaries came on board. These unwelcome Guests lounged about the ship during the 2 last days to take care that we carried nothing with us out of the ship upon landing, as everything was to be examined. Positive orders were given that no one should appear with their Breviary or anything of the kind. In the meantime all the sick and infirm who had never been able to get upon Deck, and consequently had not breathed

fresh air for a fortnight, hearing that land was in sight, made an effort to go up and see it. The ponderous Cleophræ with the help of a dozen or two hands contrived to mount the ladder. The first object she saw was Mr. Clifton with the 2 Commissaries. She rolled down with great devotion, and almost prostrate cried out, "Your blessing, Father!" Indignant at this address in the presence of such guests, he hurled her down again.

We sent out the Boat, and got some bread and butter, so we had a very good Breakfast.

About 4 o'Clock in the Afternoon we arrived at Woolwich. Just at the entrance of the Thames our Vessel ran foul of a Man of War. Several of us who were upon Deck, and saw with what violence the 2 Ships approached each other, gave themselves up for lost. The Captain wrung his hands, and appeared almost in despair, but Providence saved us by means of a small Boat which was fastened at the side of the Ship, which was crushed to pieces, but broke the blow, and we only felt a slight shock. Had it not been for this poor boat, both ships would infallibly instantly have sunk. To increase the gloom of the prospect we were actually in sight of 2 Vessels which had foundered from a similar accident, and whose Masts appeared above water.

Mr. Clifton got out here, and took a post chaise to London, in order to get carriages for us that evening to go up to Town if possible. We had proposed landing in London, but the Captain, foreseeing many difficulties which might attend our doing so, prevailed with us to land at Greenwich. Having already met with so many accidents in going up the river, we were in continual alarms. Just before we entered Greenwich we got a Pilot. We arrived there about 6 o'Clock, and cast Anchor opposite the great Hospital. Mr. Clifton found it impossible for us to get into Town that night, but he bespoke Carriages for 1 o'clock next morning. Our Friends wished us to go very early that we might get into London as privately as possible, the populace seeming much disposed for riots. That very night there was a Mob at Charing Cross who pillaged and broke the windows of two or three Houses.

Mr. Clifton returned with Mr. Wright's Man about 10 o'clock at night. They informed us that Mr. Talbot and Mr. Wright, not having succeeded in getting a House large enough to contain us all, they had settled that several of us should go to our friends in London, who were expecting us—for tho' they had taken two Houses, yet as the expense of keeping both would be very great, they wished us to give up one. We were to pay 9 Guineas a week for the two. The thought of being separated afflicted us all very much. We were willing to undergo any inconvenience rather than consent to this, and therefore we determined all of us to go to the House in Old Burlington Street, which had been taken for us, and was larger than that in Dover Street. The Captain desired us to leave our two Men Servants and two or three Lay Sisters on board till our Goods were all delivered safe, which was done accordingly. At 1 o'clock next morning Mr. Talbot's Man and two of Mr. Wright's came to fetch us. They had ordered Breakfast for us at Greenwich, where Carriages were waiting for us. Though it was so very early

when we landed, yet there were several persons about, who seeing so many dressed in black enquired if there had not been a Burial.

We had two of the long Greenwich Coaches called Caterpillars, two common coaches and a post Chaise. It was so early when we arrived at Charing Cross, that the Hackney Coaches were not come out, and the Greenwich Coaches would not take us any further; so that we were obliged to wait there near $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour. We found everything ready for us in Burlington Street when we arrived. Mr. Wright had laid in a small provision of all that was necessary for us, both there and in Dover Street. He had taken the Houses as we desired 10 Days or a fortnight before, and had been in daily expectation of our arrival. All our Friends began to be very uneasy about us, apprehending that we had been taken by the French or that some accident had happened to our Vessel. When we came to examine the house in Burlington Street, we found it would be impossible for more than 42 persons to lodge in it, though we lay with Mattresses on the Floor. So that some of us were obliged to go to the House in Dover Street—as we preferred being in two houses near each other to a greater separation. At first we hoped only to lodge there—but after the first Day we found it almost impracticable to be obliged to walk every Morning and Evening to Burlington Street for our meals, and on account of the number we were, it could not be done, without being noticed. We were in number at Dover Street 12 nuns, 3 Lay Sisters, 12 Pensioners (3 of the latter left us upon our arrival in London). Here we enjoyed a little peace as all Visitors went first to Burlington Street, and only such came as really wished to see us. Mr. Genin came to say Mass for us. Mother Joseph was the eldest and the Superior. We were obliged to wait for dinner till it was sent to us from the other House, so that we were half famished sometimes. One day we did not get it till 5 o'clock. The vessel arrived the same Day we did—and as Mr. Wright had got no Warehouse to deposit our effects, we were much distressed, not only for *place*, which we could not make in either House, but also for the expense of having them brought so far from the water, as we had intended sending them by Water to whatever part of England we should settle in. At last we procured two Warehouses in the City, which lay near the Thames. Mr. Pitt had been applied to for leave for us to come to England, and an order had been given to exempt us and our Goods from paying any duty. As soon as the Ship arrived in England, the Custom-house Officers went to visit it. Luckily the two who came were Catholics—they desired the Sisters who were aboard to show them the Boxes, which contained the Church things, promising to take care of them—and accordingly the greatest part of them went straight to the Warehouse—but soon after there came a person from the Custom-house, saying, that though we were exempted from the Duty, yet all our things were to be deposited there, to be examined. This was accordingly done—and two of us were frequently obliged to go to the Custom house, for things that we wanted during our stay in Town. This was very disagreeable, particularly as we never met any Women there. The People and Custom-house Officers who knew who we were, were very civil and attentive to us, and let several things pass without examination. They required

one of us should take an Oath to attest that the things which they specified, as Bedding, Books, Linen, &c., that came over in the Vessel called *Smallbridge*, belonged to our Community. As soon as we had done this and signed the paper, it was sent to the Treasury, and being returned, we got all our things out of the Custom-house, without Difficulty excepting a small Quantity of wine, which though it was specified in the Paper we were obliged to pay duty for, and even then it was some time before the excise Men would let us have it.

We found all our effects had arrived safe, except two or three Cases of Books, some of which were a great loss to us, as they contained several of the Nuns' Breviaries of the Autumn Quarter. Though we only paid Duty on the wine, yet what with Wharfage and Custom-house Officers' fees, we paid in all above £100.

We found the Division of the Community very inconvenient and disagreeable, and Reverend Mother determined to try and get a larger house. Upon enquiry, finding there was one to be let in Northumberland Place, she went to see it. During her absence, Mr. Talbot came with a Letter from Lord Clifford to offer us his House in Bruton Street. His letter was dated the 18th, the day we arrived in London—what could be the cause of our not getting it sooner, I know not. When Reverend Mother returned and heard of Lord Clifford's kind offer, she was much distressed—for they had been so much taken with the House they had seen, that she had desired Mr. Strickland to engage it for us immediately. However with some difficulty we got it off, and went to look at Lord Clifford's House, which we found large enough to Lodge us all, by putting our Bedding on the Floor—Sir William Gerard was so good as to offer to pay for this, and any other article we wanted, as also for coaches to convey us from the two Houses. We went to Bruton Street on the 28th or 29th of August. There was a chapel there at the Top of the House, where we had 3 or 4 Masses every Day. Lord Clifford ordered an Emigré Priest who lived in the House to lodge elsewhere in order to make more room for us. We slept 9 or 10 and more in some of the Apartments, on Mattresses on the floor. We rose at 6 o'clock—we assembled together at 9 made our Meditation and said our Office to ourselves—for it was not judged proper for us to say it aloud as the people would have heard us into the street. We made our examen at 11, then Dinner and retired to our Rooms at 12½ to make our Lecture. We assembled again at 5 for evening Meditation and to say our Office. Supped at 7, recreation till 9 o'clock, then examen and public night prayers, and to be in bed by 10 o'clock. We followed this Distribution as long as we remained in London.

So far the MS. of Mother M. Joseph and Mother Aloysia Austin has been given word for word, but it will be necessary to abridge their account of what would now be called the house hunting of the Community. Portions of Mother Agatha's MS. will be introduced instead. Lord Arundell offered them a house of his in Cornwall,¹ but this was too small. It was the same with a house which Sir John Webbe offered them in Dorset. Amesbury

¹ Lanherne.

in Wiltshire, belonging to the Duke of Queensbury, Derking Abbey in Norfolk, High Meadow in Monmouthshire, belonging to Lord Gage, were all proposed. The favourite of these proposed residences was Amesbury, but they could get no answer regarding it from the Duke of Queensbury. The MS. goes on :

Our situation was very disagreeable. We were living in London at great expense, the season was already far advanced, and several of the Nuns were sick for want of Air and exercise. None of us ever went out except upon business, and then only the Procuratrix and a companion, tho' some had their Parents and Relations in Town.

On the 16th of September this year Mother Teresa Dennett died in London of a formed dropsy. This complaint with which she has been afflicted for some years, was so much increased by the hardships of her journey, that she sank under it. She was elder sister to Reverend Mother Mary Christina, our sixth Superior. She was 70 years of age and 50 of profession, and we were preparing to keep her whole jubilee when the summons for our departure from Liege manifested to us that God was pleased we should (by resignation) glorify Him by the Cross rather than by rejoicing, though for a laudable and religious cause. We strove to pay all the funeral duties in our power to our deceased Sister, not a little affected by this first Obit since we left Liege, and under such a variety of distressing circumstances. We said the psalter, made the Communions, disciplines &c., and tho' we were crowded even to painfulness, we recited together the whole Office of the Dead, Choir ways. Mother Teresa was buried at Pancras. Several of our kind secular friends attended, together with our Director Rev. Mr. Clifton and Rev. Mr. Genin a French Jesuit who came over with us. The funeral was respectable and neat, but as private as possible. We were all of us much hurt not to be able to bury her according to our holy rule in her religious habit, and not to attend her Corpse to the burial place.

Seeing that we had no prospect of succeeding in respect of the other places we had been aiming at, Mr. Clifton determined to go into Yorkshire and look at Holme, which Lord Stourton had offered us, and which he would not dispose of till we were provided for. He wrote in the most obliging terms to Reverend Mother in London, begging that she would not, out of compliment to him, prefer Holme to any other more eligible situation, as he had only offered it as a temporary residence, and in case we could not get a better. He also desired that if we got Amesbury or any other place to suit us, he might pay our first year's rent. When Mr. Clifton returned, he told us he thought Holme would do very well for us, and as we still received no answer to any of the letters which had been written to the Duke of Queensbury, we concluded to go down to Holme. There was a good deal of furniture in the House, and we took a Waggon to send off our Church stuff, Beds and Bedding, supposing we should want them most. We informed Lord Stourton of our final determination of accepting his kind offer, but as we proposed that some

of us should set out immediately, his Lordship had not time to get the House repaired as he had intended to do. We sent all our effects in 2 ships down to Hull. We were advised to sell our Pewter in London, also our large Church bell, Jack and some other little things. We thought it would be best to go in the Mail Coach, and accordingly we agreed with the Master of the Coaches in London for £3 5 each person, and he was to take care that his Correspondent in York furnished us with Post-Chaises to take us to Holme for the above mentioned sum. We had the Coach to ourselves. Four Choir Nuns and two Laysisters set out on the 21st of October at 6 o'Clock in the morning. The waggon with our Goods had been gone some Days, and was to reach York the day after us. We arrived there about 9 o'Clock at night, and drove straight to the Bar, where we found Mrs. Rouby, the Superior of that worthy Community expecting us. They had been waiting two hours for us. The wet weather, and badness of the roads made us so late. They received us in the most cordial, friendly manner, and had prepared a very handsome supper for us. Each of them seemed to wish to give up their cells to us to sleep in, and nothing could be more kind and attentive than they were. They insisted upon our writing to Reverend Mother, and desiring that all our Community, Pensioners &c., would lodge at their Convent, and said that they should be quite hurt if they refused. We breakfasted and dined there the next Day, and our whole Community did the same when they came, and all received the same marks of kindness and attention that the first comers had experienced.

Lord and Lady Stourton chanced to be in York, and came next morning to see us. They expressed the greatest satisfaction to have it in their power to afford us an asylum in our present Distress, and only regretted that we had not given them more early notice of our Intentions, that they might have had the House a little repaired. Lord Stourton sent an express to his Steward on the receipt of our Letters two days before, and had ordered him to get everything ready for us as soon as possible.

We left York about 2 o'Clock in the Afternoon. The waggon arrived just before we set out.

We arrived at Holme about 6 in the Evening, and went straight to the Chapel to thank God for our safe arrival. As there had been only a Priest and 2 servants living in the House for some years, we found it extremely damp, particularly as there had been no fires in the rooms till that Day, the Steward having been absent when Lord Stourton's Express arrived. The provisions which his Lordship had so kindly ordered, were not come. There was only one joint of meat in the house, but we preferred taking tea, a small quantity of which we had luckily brought with us.

Next Day being one of the Fridays of St. F. Xavier, and the Feast of St. Raphael, we went to Communion. As our Inclosure was not to be limited till Reverend Mother arrived, we sent one of the Sisters into the Village to procure us some little necessities.

The Steward returned, and next Day sent us a provision of everything we wanted, as Coals, Beer, 2 Barrels of Ale, 6 doz. of wine, Tea, Coffee, Sugar,

Spices, Meat and Butter, so that we wanted for nothing but water, which was a very essential thing, and very scarce here, the only pump for hard water being frequently dry, and there being some defect in the Pipes that conveyed the soft water, so that it came very seldom. On the 25th Lady Clifford and Mrs. Butler paid us a visit. They showed us every kindness and attention, and expressed great concern that the House was so much out of repair. They desired the Steward to get it made comfortable for us as soon as possible, and have the Conduit Pipes examined that we might have water; but though a great deal of pains was taken about this, no remedy could be found, and we were generally obliged to get water from some distance, for which reason Lord Stourton ordered a Water Cart for us. We found the House larger than we expected, tho' not sufficiently so as to enable us to take a considerable number of Pensioners. We were particularly pleased with the Chapel, which is larger than they commonly are in England, and was the first Chapel on the ground floor that was built in Yorkshire.

Holme-Hall was the Family Residence of the Noble Family of Langdale. It is situate on the Spalding Moor, 24 miles from York, 14 from Beverley, and 5 from Market Weighton, the nearest post town to the Hall. Houghton, the seat of Philip Langdale, Esq., was in our Neighbourhood, and Everingham that of N. Constable, Esq., still nearer.

The Chapel at Holme Hall was built by Lord Langdale, about the middle of the 18th Century, and it is said, was the first Roman Catholic Chapel built from the foundation for a sacred edifice, since the time of Elizabeth. It is very neat and handsome, having 3 large Windows to the East. The Altar-piece is a very good Copy of the beautiful Transfiguration by Raphael.

Lord Langdale's zeal for Religion inspired him with great courage in the undertaking, for besides that Catholics laboured under severe restrictions and penalties, the Protestant Minister of the Parish of Holme, at that time had got some suspicion of Lord Langdale's design, tho' the building was ostensibly set about as an additional wing to the Hall. Yet this man, a bitter Enemy to Catholics, would frequently come and walk about near the place, and would repeat in a malicious tone, "I know what they are about; but I will be up with them." Divine Providence, however, preserved the noble and pious Proprietor from any further effects of his ill will.

When we arrived at Holme, we found there the Rev. Mr. Story a very respectable, but very infirm Priest of the O.S.B. He was, and had been long Chaplain to the Cath. Congregation of Holme, which though very small indeed, this worthy old Gentleman was quite unequal to attend to. He soon quitted the place after our arrival, and Rev. Mr. Clifton consented to take charge of the Congregation, till another Missioner could be provided. The Nuns were all arrived for the 7th of November, and Providence which had preserved us in such an extraordinary manner from Colds and Illness during our long and tedious Journey, did the same here, for notwithstanding the dampness, and the severity of the winter which was very remarkable, and such as had not been for many years, so

that bad Colds and Fevers were prevalent all over England, we were quite free from them, and enjoyed our health better than we had ever done at Liege.

Reverend Mother arrived upon the 6th, and a few days later we began to observe Regularity, and keep the same hours as we formerly did at Liege. The Chapel being very damp and cold, we did not at first go to Matins or rise at 4.

The Garden was entirely overgrown with grass and weeds, and we were much distressed during the winter for gardenstuff, as we could not buy any in the neighbourhood, but a Protestant Lady who lived at Pocklington about 7 miles off, hearing of our distress in this respect, tho' an entire stranger to us, was so good as to send us a Basket of different kinds of Vegetables every week till we got our own Garden in order. Lord Stourton allowed us sufficient ground to keep 2 or 3 Cows and 2 Horses.

Reverend Mother fixed the bounds of our Inclosure to the Garden containing 2 Acres of Ground walled round, 2 large Fields which were at the side of the House, the Grounds round the house which we had for our own use, a small Orchard, and a Shrubbery above $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile long. In the latter we were not to go alone, as it was some distance from the House.

The People in the village did not like our settling so near them, apprehending we should consume their provisions, and make everything very dear. Upon our first arrival some of them were greatly alarmed to see so many persons all dressed in a peculiar manner. They thought we were Frenchmen dressed in Women's clothes. With this idea the Constable went to Mr. Vavator, the Justice of the Peace, and told him that an alarming Circumstance had happened, that upwards of 50 persons were arrived at Holme Hall, whom he feared were Frenchmen, and that several more were expected. He therefore thought it would be well done to light up the Beacon which was at the top of the Hill behind the House which would give a general alarm in the country. Mr. Vavator told him to make himself easy, for that he had been informed who these persons were, and that there was nothing to be apprehended from them.

They were scarcely settled at Holme when the long expected letter came from the Duke of Queensbury's Steward making an offer of Amesbury, but they now refused to take it for the present, and the Nuns from Louvain succeeded in obtaining it.

We doubted not [our MS. continues], but there was a special Providence in this, for it would not have been large enough for our numerous Community and School, nor is it a situation to be ambitioned for religious Persons. It is so very near Salisbury and Bath, that we should have been exposed to have seen a great deal of Company, and should not have had the advantage of enjoying solitude as we have done here, and which seems by special Providence to have been given us, during the short time we are to remain here, in order to renew our fervour in our religious Duties, especially the spirit of recollection and prayer, so essential to our

state. It is the more necessary for us now, on account of the continual scenes of Bustle and Dissipation to which we have been exposed ever since we left our Dear Convent (particularly in London) till we came here. We made our Annual Retreat for Xmas, and our Renovation on the Epiphany, 1795. We all dressed in the Habit to renew our Vows. We kept Kingstide with the usual privileges. We had only 10 Pensioners, and could not take more, being already much crowded. They had the two largest Bed Chambers, a lesser one, and the Servants' Hall for their Refectory. We continued our former plan of education. On the 12th of March, 1795, Miss Charlotte Clifford, in Religion Sister Ann Teresa, was professed in the Chapel of Holme Hall. She had been clothed at Liege, Octr. 8th, 1793; at that time we erroneously thought ourselves in perfect security from the French. The public Solemnity therefore of the Clothing, extraordinary fine music, and other circumstances of pious joy on that occasion, were feelingly contrasted to us at the present date, by the strict privacy and simplicity of the ceremony of her Profession; but it served to manifest more and more that steady resolution which this excellent young Lady had so remarkably shown during the whole time of our distressing emigration.

In the Month of April, the weather began to grow warm, and we perceived it would be almost impossible for us to continue to sleep so many in one room. . . . Accordingly we wrote to the parents of the Young Ladies under our care requesting that they would remove them. This gave great dissatisfaction to many who wished us well, and several different reports were spread concerning us, one in particular was credited by most of our friends, viz., that we were going to America, and had even a ship ready on the river to take us thither. This gave great concern to all our Friends. We received numberless letters upon the subject, nor could we for a considerable time convince them that we had never entertained the most distant idea of such a project.

Sister Mary Felix Havers took the Habit on the 19th of May 1795. She had remained here in her secular dress from the 23rd of December 1794.

At Pentecost this year (1795) Rev. Mr. Clifton had a very violent fever, brought on by excessive fatigue, concern and apprehension which he had undergone in conducting the Community from Liege. He was for some time in imminent danger, and though after a great length of time he did recover, his constitution and faculties were so injured by this illness, that he was never afterwards the man he had been before. The retreat was deferred till November. On the 19th of the same month Sister M. Sales Laurenson and Sister Mary Barbara Dufresne were clothed. Reverend Mother gave them the Crucifix at the entrance of the Chapel, and they went in the last in procession with her. The ceremony at the Inclosure Door was omitted, but all the rest was performed as usual. We all put on our Habits for the ceremony, but took them off as soon as it was over, excepting the two Brides who wore them 3 days.

The inquiries about houses were going on with great vigour, but the long accounts of these are omitted.

Our good friends at Stonyhurst, like ourselves, were struggling with the difficulties of a new and precarious establishment. Notwithstanding the benevolence and Charity of Mr. Weld, many of the Fathers thought the endeavours to form a settled Residence would never succeed. Among others, the Venerable Old Father Thomas Ellerker,¹ whose infirmities were so much increased by the fatigues and hardships of the journey, and the depression which these circumstances occasioned, that he sunk under them May 1st, 1795. Confidence in God and Perseverance however triumphed over all difficulties, and they began to get on rapidly towards the middle of summer.

In the month of September some of our friends from Stonyhurst rode over to see us; they were the first whom we had seen since our arrival in England, they sang and said Mass for us to our great Comfort, though our first meeting, and in our present circumstances, must necessarily be accompanied with many painful feelings.

Sister Mary Felix Havers was clothed on the 3rd of February, 1796, with the same ceremonies as the other two were clothed last year. On the 28th of April she left us, her father and friends being desirous that she should have a further trial and return to the world for a few months. The night before her departure, after examen &c., she took leave of the Nuns by asking Reverend Mother's blessing, saluting her and the rest of the Community. Next day, after the hours, prayers were said, as the Constitutions prescribe when any Religious is obliged to leave the Convent.

The Blessed Sacrament was not exposed during Carnival, but we had each of us half an hour's prayer,² and were to say the Seven Penitential Psalms and the Long Litanies. We had each day Benediction at seven o'Clock, after Mass at the usual hour, and after Vespers. The first day the Miserere was sung, and the two other days the Litany of our Blessed Lady. On Corpus Christi we had Benediction at 7 o'Clock, the Blessed Sacrament exposed all day, and sung Compline at 5. Half an hour's prayer each.

On the feast of the Sacred Heart, we had a solemn Benediction at seven o'Clock in the morning, and each of us half an hour's prayer; but the Blessed Sacrament was not exposed till High Mass, and was put up after Compline which was sung.

On Sunday June 19th we left off singing Vespers on account of the number of Protestants who crowded to the Chapel to hear us sing, and frequently behaved disrespectfully. We had Benediction after Compline. Two or three weeks after we began to sing Compline instead of Vespers.

Mother Constantia Roper, Daughter of Lord Teynham, died this year. She was dressed in the habit, and the Nuns said the Psalter by her. Her corpse was carried to the Chapel with the usual ceremonies at a quarter before seven in the

¹ Brother Foley says he was fifty-six.

² This means that the watch before the Blessed Sacrament was kept up although it was not thought expedient to have the Exposition.

morning, and we began the Office a quarter after. She was buried that evening in the chancel of the Parish Church at Holme, which stands upon the Hill, and had formerly been a Catholic Church dedicated to our Blessed Lady. She was carried to the Church by 8 Women, and some others were invited to accompany the funeral with Mr. Clifton, two of the Nuns, and our Men servants.

Our Duty as well as the reduced situation of our pecuniary circumstances, which as may be supposed was great, even distressing, made us and our friends begin to be very solicitous to procure an establishment where we might be able to resume our School, and by so doing fulfil an essential Obligation of our vocation, and also in part retrieve our nearly exhausted funds of subsistence. Mr. Clifton with others of our friends went to see several places which were advertized to be let; but they were all too dear for our means, or otherwise unsuited for the residence of a Religious Community.

In August we received letters recommending a house in Wiltshire which was very large, and considered as a very proper situation for a school. Wrox Hall in Warwickshire was also proposed, and it was decided that Mr. Clifton and two of the Nuns should visit both houses, but further accounts of Wrox Hall proved that it was unsuitable. Mr. Barrow, an ex-Jesuit, was going to Liege upon some business for the Gentlemen of Stonyhurst, and he came to Holme Hall to see if he could be of any service with respect to our affairs there. The Chapter gave him power of receiving any debts which were due to us; also to try if any of our tenants would purchase the land for a few years, and pay a certain sum of money for that term, and to enquire whether we could sell any part of it. This deferred our journey for some days. On the 18th of September Mr. Clifton set out, and arrived at Salisbury on the 20th. Next day they went to see Dean House which was the name of the house that had been recommended to us, chiefly by the Arundel family and Lady Smythe, who had interested themselves much to procure a situation in their neighbourhood. They found that the house, though large, was small for our numerous Community and school. They were very much disappointed with the garrets, being sensible that the greatest number of the Nuns must lodge there; they found them very much out of repair, and very bad rooms at the best. The rest of the house answered to the description we had received; but it was a very ancient building and stood in need of repair. . . . The house and estate formerly belonged to Lord Renilow, and was left by him at his lady's death to a Mr. Moore who is a Lunatic. Lady Dacre has it in trust, and has power to give a lease for it of 21 years. She lets the Mansion House with the Manor and 25 Acres of Land, but from a principle of honour will not give a lease for the latter above 7 years, because at Mr. Moore's death it is to be divided between 4 Persons in Ireland, and he is now 80 years of age. Mr. Emly, a great Brewer in Salisbury, took a lease of it for the above mentioned term last March. Mr. Emly pressed for a decision and would not even give the travellers time to consult the Community by letter, so they agreed to take the house for one year. He agreed to get some repairs made and to lay in coals for the winter, but neither of these things were attended to. The expense of so long a journey was very distressing, and we begged our friends to

help us. They gave us £500. The furniture was to go by sea from Hull to Southampton at the cost of £100, and five laysisters with two Servants travelled in the same ship. They sailed on October 21st, 1796. Three of the Nuns were appointed to set off for Dean to be ready to receive the Goods, and to provide the waggons and things necessary to have them conveyed from Southampton. They set off from Holme upon the 23rd October, which was the same Day two years before that the first six of our Community had arrived there. No fires had been lighted and no provision of coal laid in. We found no kind friends here to lay in a provision of every little necessary for us, as we had before met with at Holme in our worthy benefactor Lord Stourton. The laysisters who came in the ship, arrived about an hour or two after the Nuns. The transport of the Goods was very troublesome. The Nuns had been led to believe that they could be taken by water to within five miles of Dean House, but the roads were so bad with the New Navigation at which they were at work that none of the farmers would let their horses or waggons go, not even for their own provision of coal, so we had land Carriage to pay from Southampton. We were very fortunate in meeting with a very civil Captain of the Ship who was very attentive to our Sisters and Servants, and took great care of all our things, and we received everything very safe. He said he never before had so quick or prosperous a voyage. One of the waggons was overturned during the Night, but without any considerable damage. One Box only was missing, which a poor man found upon the road to Southampton, and brought to us the following week. Our French Priest, Mr. Genin, and two servants were to have arrived on the 26th, but they had been overturned in the stage Coach to London, and as Mr. Genin's arm was a good deal hurt, they remained there a day longer. They arrived at Dean early on Sunday morning, the 30th, and as we had borrowed everything necessary from Salisbury, we had Mass on that day for the first time. But as there was something to be done in the room we had designed for the Chapel, and our Tabernacle was not yet arrived, we could not have the Blessed Sacrament till the 5th of November, from which time we had that happiness. As there were no Public carriages that went across the country the nuns thought it would be less expensive to take the stage from York to London, and another from thence to Salisbury, though it was near 50 miles out of the road. All the Community came that way, excepting some whose friends desired them to take a private carriage at their expense, and the sick who benefited by the same. In this last part of the journey our company, consisting of 8 Persons in 3 post-chaises, were greatly distressed. We had set off late from London, and they drove so slow, that we had to cross Salisbury Plain in the Night, and did not reach Salisbury till 2 o'clock Sunday morning. When we arrived they would not let us in for a great while. When we did enter, we found neither fire nor victuals. We had not dined that day, nor had anything since breakfast, besides we were perishing with cold. It was the 5th of November, and we had been harassed all the way with squibs, &c. which were flung at our horses, and at the windows of our carriage as we came along. At last we got a miserable wood fire and some cold meat, which we held to the fire with our forks to warm. Being Sunday morning, and we knew of no

Chapel in Salisbury, we dared not go to bed there, but ordered carriages to take us on to Dean directly. These could not be obtained without great difficulty, everybody being gone to bed at the inn, the morning intensely cold, and the road to Dean so horribly bad, that those Postillions who knew the way were afraid to take us, and those who did not know it refused to take us. At length we set off about an hour after our arrival (three in the morning), and had a dreadful jolting journey, in the midst of which the Postillions seemed to have lost their way. We arrived at 5 in the morning; everybody was in bed. We called and rang in vain for a great while, and when we were let in found no fire, but we were soon accommodated by our dear Sisters with all we wanted. During the remainder of that winter we suffered much from cold, as the weather was severe; there were no coals to be had, and we had nothing but wood fires laid upon the hearth. Reverend Mother arrived on the 12th of November, and Mr. Clifton with the last of the Community on the 15th, from which time regularity was observed as usual, except singing and rising at Matins.

After we had been some time at Dean we found the repairs went so slowly that we concluded we should not be able to open our school till Easter. Mr. Emly was at last prevailed upon to let us have 6 or 7 acres of ground, but at a very dear rate, so that the rent he demanded for this and the house came to not much short of what he paid for the House and Manor and the other 20 acres of which he had the lease.

There were many more grievances against Mr. Emly, but Dean House itself was a pretty place, and Mother Agatha has left us a good description of it, and of the establishment of the community there, which must be given at the risk of a little repetition:

Dean House had been a magnificent Building. It had formerly belonged to a Duke of Beaufort. It was much decayed at our Arrival; and yet combined with melancholy ruins a great many wonderful beauties. There was a Terrace which had cost £10,000, which extended itself the whole length of the Western Side of the Building. From this terrace, by two descents, of Stone Steps, towards the middle, you came to another gravelled Terrace, of the same length, but not so broad as the upper one—from this last You again descended, by steps similar to the aforementioned, to a 3rd gravelled Terrace, like the 2nd:—and from that finally to a beautiful green Bank formed into 3 rows like Steps, still extending lengthways as above, the green steps were about 4 feet broad: from these you descended into a small, most pleasant sloping meadow, at the bottom of which, parallel to the Terrace ran a purling Brook. Beyond this Brook in a direct line from the Centre of the Terrace rose gradually a beautiful Avenue of Trees. Under the grand Terrace, were two large and beautiful Green houses, one on each side of the descents. The Green houses reached from the highest Terrace, down to the Green Bank at the bottom.

Dean House at the time of our taking possession of it, was the property of

a Lady Dacres: It had formerly belonged to the Duke of Beaufort. It was situate in the parish of W. Dean in the County of Wilts. The parish Church was so near the house that we could with ease hear the singing and preaching from the windows on the North side. It was a very unpleasant circumstance for us; but it corroborated a report we had heard, that this mansion subsisted in Catholic Times and was thus disposed for the convenience of the Dean and his Clergy.

The entrance of the house was on the East side, and a large Coach Ring there was inclosed by a handsome iron railing, parallel to the front of the house; before which all the people of the parish passed on Sundays to go to Church.

The house stood in a very elevated situation, so that we could scarcely distinguish many of the dwellings, which were built on the side and went sloping down the hill.

We began to move to this place towards the end of this Year (1796), some in post Chaises, some in the Stages, much as we had come to Holme Hall (in 1794) but our journey to Dean was much more inconvenient and troublesome than that had been; and very different was the reception that awaited the Community here, from that which they had met with in Yorkshire. The weather was intensely cold and very damp, no provisions of coals had been laid in, the house was comfortless and out of repair; an unpleasant neighbourhood and a troublesome landlord completed the catalogue of inconveniences which rendered Dean House a most undesirable residence.

To return to the longer MS.

Soon after our arrival, Bishop Walmesley in whose district we were, wrote to Reverend Mother, and signified to her his desire that we should wear our Religious Habit. She remonstrated, and wrote to the Nuncio. His Excellency answered that he did not think it prudent for us to change our dress at present and desired us to inform Bishop Walmesley that this was his opinion. On April 26th, 1797, we received an order from his Lordship to put on our habits at once, and we changed our dress on the second Sunday after Easter.

Miss Gandolfi came on the 19th of July, and took the habit with the usual ceremonies on the 4th of September, and wore the Clergess's dress as formerly.

On the 17th of October, 1797, Reverend Mother, the Procuratrix,¹ and Mistress of the school² went to Salisbury to take the oath of allegiance which was required from all Catholics in order to open a public school. It was only requisite for the Superior to take it, but the other two took it also, not to be under the disagreeable necessity, in case of her death, to be obliged to go again, for it suffices if one person in the Community has taken it.

Sister Benedict Joseph Trant died the 11th of December, 1797. She was laid out in the habit, and the shroud was put on when they put her into the coffin. She was buried on the 14th, and carried to the Churchyard by four men, which is the practice in the place. The parson attended the burial, but the corpse was not

¹ Mother Joseph Smith.

² Mother Francis Xaveria Trant.

taken into the Church. Mother Gertrude Lynch was buried after the same manner.

Mr. McEvoy had signified to his sister his intention of contributing considerably towards a home for us, in case we should meet with an eligible situation. Some time after we had been settled at Dean, many of our friends wished us to purchase Clarence House, which had been built for the Duke of Clarence, but had been sold because his Grace did not like it, and was again to be disposed of. It was about ten miles from London, which situation must of necessity have exposed us to many inconveniences, particularly to that of frequent visits, which to most of the Community was an insurmountable Difficulty, as they were afraid the spirit of Dissipation would creep in. Mr. McEvoy and most of our Friends being very desirous that we should purchase this House, which was reckoned a great Bargain, Mr. Clifton went to see it, and in the month of Oct. or Nov. we were just upon the point of agreeing for it. Reverend Mother had already assembled the Council, and proposed to call the Chapter to know if they would agree to the purchase. Mr. McEvoy had then promised to give £4000 towards the purchase of that or any other House we should think most eligible. The Council, judging that the informations already received with respect to taxes, and the land (part of which was Copy-hold) were not sufficient, the Chapter was deferred till all particulars were known. In the Interim we were informed of New Hall in Essex, which it was thought would suit us better. This seemed to be a most special effect of Providence in our regard, and we doubted not but it was owing to the fervent prayers of many in the Community, who had a great objection to the other situation for the reasons I have mentioned. Some of our Friends went down from London to see New Hall, and tho' they had been prepossessed against it, and partial to Clarence House, they entirely changed, and declared themselves in favour of New Hall. Mr. Clifton went off immediately to see it, and found it a most suitable place in every respect. The House, tho' very old, had within 15 years been put in perfect repair. It was very large and spacious; the Grounds were beautiful, and we were at liberty to purchase as much or as little Land as we chose. The Sum demanded for the House was much less than was asked for Clarence House, and the land all freehold. From the accounts which Mr. Clifton and our Friends gave of New Hall, and the plans of the House which had been sent to Dean, we were all much pleased with it, and doubted not but this was the place Providence had destined for our Establishment.

On the 5th of November, 1798, Reverend Mother proposed to the Chapter the purchase of New Hall in the County of Essex. The House was valued at 2000 Guineas, and as much Land as our Friends should think advantageous to us. The Chapter consented, and the purchase was immediately agreed upon with Mr. Olmuis, the Proprietor. Some difficulties occurred in the business, but in the month of December all was concluded. As all the furniture in the House was to be sold by Auction, we could not take possession till the 16th of January, 1799.

The Season being very severe, many of our Friends wished us not to leave Dean till Spring, but we were sensible that having no one at New Hall to take care

of the House, we might suffer great losses; we also wished to have all the necessary changes to be done, begun immediately, and therefore we determined to leave Dean as soon as possible, tho' we had taken it for another year, which would not expire till Michaelmas 1799. We agreed with Mr. Emly to quit Dean House before Lady Day, that we might not pay the taxes for the last half year, and that in consideration of our giving the Land and Garden up to him, he should allow us £12, and in case he let the House before the expiration of the year, that we should pay no rent from the Term that the new Tenant entered upon it.

We paid 2000 Guineas for the House at New Hall, and £2000 for about 58 Acres of Land. The whole sum amounting to £4000 was generously paid by Mr. McEvoy. The timber on the Land cost us £170. We were advised to purchase the Fixtures and some of the Furniture which might prove useful to us, and we bought to the value of £319.

The House was described to us as being in excellent repair. Our Goods were all sent by Land from Salisbury to New Hall and cost £239 8s. 3d. The first 4 Nuns left Dean on the 21st of January, 1799, and arrived at New Hall on the 25th, when the first waggon should have been there, but the bad Roads prevented the waggons from reaching New Hall on the Day appointed, so that Night the Nuns and 2 Laysisters who accompanied them were obliged to sleep upon the Ground.

The names of the first six who arrived have not been preserved, but Mother Mary Anne and Mother Angela were among the number. It was arranged that they should all sleep in the present Old Parlour, and some of them did so, Mother Angela using the coal scuttle for a pillow, but Mother Mary Anne, with her old love of adventure explored the house at once, and at the opposite side of it found a small room formed by the bow window which now that the partition wall has been thrown down, stands at the extremity of the lower school dormitory. She slept there that night, and continued to do so until the cells were built. It was long known as Mother Mary Anne's room. It is said that Mother Helen slept in the "Pink" Room. A Person had been sent to take possession of the House on the 16th, to get it aired, and to have the Garden a little cultivated.

Had it not been for our good Friend and Neighbour Mr. Wright, the Nuns would have been very much distressed on their arrival for provisions of every kind, but he kindly sent them a little of everything and laid in a large provision of potatoes and wood at his own expense. The latter article cost him £30.

Many of our Friends offered us to lodge in their Houses in London on our way to New Hall, and we had many invitations to spend a day or two with them, but it was concluded, that except those who accompanied the Pensioners, or any who might be detained on account of Sickness, no one should stay more than a night in Town.

The weather continued to be tolerable. Some snow fell on the 29th, but the 30th was a fine Day. Reverend Mother and 3 Nuns left Dean that Afternoon, slept at Salisbury, and set off next morning in the Stage Coach. It snowed in the night and all Day most violently, and there was a very high wind. Seventeen of

the Community had left Dean, and both they and those who remained were very uneasy about Reverend Mother. They arrived safe, tho' late, in London. Mr. Clifton was detained there ill, so they had no Mass at New Hall on Sunday the 27th, nor on Candlemas Day. The weather was so bad that Reverend Mother and Company could not leave London on the 1st of February as they proposed, but they set out next day with Mr. Clifton, and arrived at New Hall in the Evening. Next Day was Sunday, February 3rd, and they had Mass for the first time.

When the Reverend Mother left Dean, the Stage Coaches had been engaged for the two following Days to take the remaining part of the Community from Salisbury to London, but neither Post-Chaises nor Public Carriages could go for the Depth of the snow, so that we were detained at Dean till the 21st of February. We had the blessing of the Candles and all as usual on Candlemas Day. The following week being Carnival, we had half hours of prayer, Benediction and the Litanies of Our Lady sung, and we continued keeping Regularity till we were only 6 or 7 remaining.

We met with numberless Disappointments during all this time, on account of the Coaches and Waggon being stopped with the snow. Indeed, it seemed as if the Enemy was trying to prevent our reunion, and was vexed that we had got at last so comfortable a situation. Two of the Waggoner's Horses were killed in carrying our Goods, and two or three of the Community were so ill that the Doctor thought the removing them would be of dangerous Consequence. However, when the weather changed, they got better, and we were all safe arrived at New Hall for the 3rd of March. As Carriage was very expensive, we sold our Chairs, Tables, &c. by Auction.

The House at New Hall, tho' large, was not calculated for so many Persons, and we were much crowded, having given up most of the rooms for the School. All the Apartments at one end of the house were entirely for the Pensioners, and the other end for the Community. The Chapel was immediately begun. A room was taken off from the great Hall for a Refectory for the Y. Ladies, over which a Choir was made. The Chapel was completely finished and blessed on the 14th of August, 1799. We had Mass in it for the first time on the Assumption. Till then the present work room served us for a Chapel.

We had thoughts of turning the stables into Cells, but upon examination, they were found to be so much out of repair, and the Timbers, &c. so rotten, that it was judged to be not worth the expense. We concluded to pull them down, and build Cells and Rooms which we could not well do without. Our School increasing very fast, we were much distressed for place, particularly for the Sick, as we had no Infirmary, nor could we spare a room for that purpose.

On the 29th of May, 1799, the Foundation was laid for the new Building. Reverend Mother placed the 1st Stone, Mother Aloysia Stanislaus MacEvoy the 2nd, the Procuratrix the 3rd, and the 1st Discreet the 4th.

Under the Foundation Stones were put Relics of St. Teresa, St. Francis Xavierius, and other Saints. The new Building was finished, and we entered it on the 29th of May, 1800. On the 28th Mr. Clifton blessed all the rooms. On the

29th, being the memorable day on which 6 years before we had quitted our Dear Convent, we petitioned Reverend Mother to let us take possession of our Cells, which she granted. We sang Te Deum and offered up Mass in thanksgiving for our preservation. Everyone much enjoyed the comfort of once more having a Cell, which most of us had been so long deprived of, for at Holme Hall, Dean, and here, few had been able to have separate rooms.

The new Building consisted of 38 Cells, a Room with a light Closet for the Superior, a room for the Procuratrix, a Noviceship, 2 small Infirmaries, a room for the Linen, and 2 Parlours. The Cells were 10 Feet by $8\frac{1}{2}$ and $9\frac{1}{2}$ high.

Everything about the House was much out of repair. The first Summer after we came we were obliged to new lead the House. Very fortunately it was a remarkably dry summer, and during the whole 6 or 7 weeks that they were about it, we had not a drop of Rain. The quantity of old lead upon the House was considerable, and more than sufficient to pay the expense of doing it anew. We were obliged to have the numberless Drains about the House opened and cleaned, as nothing had been done to them for many years. We had only one Well of Drinkable Water, and tho' there are several Pipes which conduct it to the different places, as the Scullery, Wash House, Cellar, &c., yet there was not one that conveyed it to the Pensioners' end of the House, so that all the Water necessary for Tea, washing, &c. was to be fetched from our end of the House, which was a very great Inconvenience. To prevent this, there being a very fine Spring in the Pleasure Ground about 20 yards from the school, we laid a Pipe to conduct the water to it. The Pipe cost us about £27.

The Oven for the use of the Family was in the wash-house, and too small for us, consequently we were obliged to make a new Bake-house for which purpose we took a large Stable in which we built an Oven, where we can bake 60 Loaves of Bread at a time, and we have also made every other Convenience proper to a bake-house.

Christmas Night 1800 we sang Matins and Mass as we did at Liege. In Easter week 1801 Bishop Douglas came to give Confirmation. He dressed in his Room, and came into the Chapel attended by Monr. Benoit, without any Ceremony. He did not say Mass, but made a very pretty little Exhortation both before and after giving Confirmation. He desired that one of the Nuns should be God-mother to those who were confirmed. She stood near the Bishop and laid her hand upon their Shoulder as he confirmed them. The next Day he said the Community Mass.

In July Mrs. Laurenson being very desirous to board here, and we having no spare rooms, she was at the expense of fitting up two Rooms for herself over the Bake-house. It cost her £37 and was not ready for her till November. There remained on the same floor sufficient place for a pretty large Room where we made a Dining Parlour for the Boarders. Rev. Mr. O'Brien, an Ex-Jesuit who was our Extraordinary and had been with us about a year, gave £20 towards fitting it up.

In December 1801 peace was concluded with France, but the Articles were not signed. We were advised to send a Person to Paris for leave to take possession and dispose of our Land and Property at Liege. Reverend Mother assembled the Chapter to ask to sell our Land and House at Liege, to which they consented.



PAVILION.

Mr. Clifton undertook this business, and went several times to London to procure passports. He got everything necessary for his journey, but from one motive or another, never went.

We owed money to some Persons at Liege, who drew upon us for payment. We thought proper to refuse their bills, as we wished to have our debts paid with money which was owing to us at Liege.

The definitive Treaty of Peace being concluded, one of the Conditions agreed upon was that all English Property should be restored to those who had any on the Continent, and we were therefore very anxious to get a proper Person to go and claim our House and property at Liege.

Mr. Barrow, an Ex-Jesuit and a particular friend of our Community, was going abroad on a similar business for the Gentlemen of Stonyhurst, and kindly undertook to settle our affairs at the same time. He arrived here on the 6th of June, 1802. We gave him a power of Attorney to act for us, to receive all that was due to us, to pay our Debts, and to dispose of our Property if he could possibly do it upon reasonable Terms, reserving the House which we were desirous of conserving at least for the present. He set off for Harwich on the 11th of June, and was to go by Holland straight to Liege. The power of Attorney was copied from one drawn up by a Lawyer for the Nuns at Preston for a similar purpose, and was signed by Reverend Mother, the Sub-prioress and Procuratrix in presence of a Witness and Mr. Gepp our Apothecary, who was to attest before a Magistrate that he had seen the said Power signed by the above mentioned Persons, and after he had taken his Oath of the same and signed the Attestation, the Town seal was put upon it. The Stamp for the power of Attorney cost 15s., and that for the Attestation 2s.

In the month of March 1802, Mr. Olmius wrote to us, saying that he was going to dispose of the Farms which joined to our Grounds, and in which the Spring, Pipes, &c. lay from which we had all the Water for the House, excepting that which we lately got for the School, and which was not sufficient for their use, as it frequently pumped dry. When the House and Land were purchased, no conditions had been agreed upon, or even mentioned on this essential point. Mr. Olmius thought that before he parted with his Farms, some agreement ought to be made to ensure so necessary a thing to us, as the conservation of the Water for the use of the House. The 4 Fields through which the Pipes passed, and in which the Spring lay, contained near 30 Acres.

In order to avoid Disputes and Disagreements in future with respect to this affair, we wrote to Mr. Olmius to know if we could purchase this Land. His answer was, that he had it not in his power to divide the Farm, and that the whole must be sold together. We then begged he would get Mr. Butler the Lawyer to draw up a proper Deed in order to secure the provision of Water to the House, which was done.

So ends Mother Mary Joseph's account of the migration of the nuns from Liège, and their arrival at New Hall.

The reader will wish to know the fate of the old Convent on the

Avroy. It appears that the republican administration had made use of it in favour of certain families whose houses had been burned during the wars. Part of the property had been sold. However, the mission of Father Barrow was so far successful that by a decree dated August 21st, 1802, the Préfet of the department of Ourthe restored the property to the Sepulchrines, and they received at least some portion of their rents. In 1822, the convent was put up for sale, and the same was done afterwards with portions of their property in the country. The Government of the Low Countries, in 1823, took possession of the remainder and also seized the purchase money of the last sales. The Dutch authorities would not allow the Nuns to receive the revenues of their property unless they chose to return and open a school. This they were unwilling to do. Unfortunately we do not possess a full account of this business, and our information is taken from the "Rues de Liège." It is sad to know that the convent Church was long used for a white-lead factory, but was pulled down in 1833. Several houses are built upon the site of it. The buildings that now occupy the place of the convent include from numbers 17 to 23 of the Rue St. Gilles. An *école normale* stands in what was once the nuns' garden. A convent of the Daughters of the Cross occupies some portion of the building.

A few stray stories have come down to us, though, like most things preserved by word of mouth, exact details are wanting, for instance, on one of the journeys the nuns offered an angry coachman some gingerbreads to appease him. On another occasion a good breakfast had been prepared for the nuns at a friend's house; but the Superiors had gone on, and there was no one to give them leave to accept the invitation, so they left the breakfast untouched.

What may be called the tradition of the old Liège statue must be classed among these legends. It is copied from the writing of a nun who died in 1892.

Over the great enclosure door opening on the street at Liège was a large stone statue of our Blessed Lady which was highly venerated and thought to be miraculous. A woman of the town left a legacy to the community to burn a "three farthing candle" before it every night. Nothing was more regretted by the old nuns than this statue which they had been obliged to leave with their dear convent. After some years the house was pulled down, but for a long time it was not known what had become of the statue. A few years ago, a convert gentleman called here. He said he had visited Liège and seen the place where the convent once stood, and asked if we knew what had become of the statue which stood over the enclosure door. Finding that we did not, he said he was told that when the

French entered the town, soon after the departure of the community the soldiers took down the statue and amused themselves by shooting at it. A nun of our order, and as he was told, one of our community who was too old and infirm to escape with us, came out of her place of concealment, and throwing her arms round the statue, besought the soldiers to desist. They only mocked at her, and as she would not move, actually shot her dead and entirely demolished the statue. This may be true except as regards a nun of our community, for it was not one of the least of God's mercies to us, that of so large a community there should not have been one, at the moment of departure, so old or ill as not to be able to travel. As there were three other convents of our order at Liége at the time this nun may have belonged to one of them. Perhaps too the story may not be true at all except as to the fact that the French soldiers did certainly use at least one statue of Our Lady for a target as Father John Laurenson testifies in his account of the migration of the Fathers of the Academy.

The Community from Liége on landing at Greenwich, August 18th, 1794, consisted of the following members :

Reverend Mother Aloysia Clough of the Immaculate Conception.

Mother Teresa Dennett.

Mother Helen Talbot.

Mother Magdalen Champney of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mother Ursula Semmes of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mother Aloysia Joseph Wright of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mother Mary Joseph of the Holy Cross.

Mother Ann Xaveria Webbe of the Sacred Wounds.

Mother Constantia Roper of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

Mother Christina Trant of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mother Gonzaga Stevenson of the Passion.

Mother Mary Berchmans Smith of the Passion.

Mother Rose Perrin of the Immaculate Conception.

Mother Gertrude Lynch of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Mother Agatha Laurenson of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mother Baptist Stutter of the Holy Cross.

Mother Ignatia Dennett of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Mother Stanislaus Dennett of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Mother Christina Juliana Hales of the Blessed Sacrament.

Mother Francis Xaveria Trant of the Passion.

Mother Mary Angela Hill of the Passion.

Mother Aloysia Stanislaus McEvoy of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Mother Benedict Joseph Trant of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Mother Mary Anne Head of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Mother Mary Regis Gerard of the Infant Jesus.

Mother Teresa Chantal Reynolds of the Blessed Sacrament.

Sister Aloysia Archdeacon of the Immaculate Conception.

Sister Austin Archdeacon of Divine Providence.

Sister Teresa Joseph Fermour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sister Aloysia Austin Clifford of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Sister Francis Borgia Cross of the Passion.

Sister Mary Xaveria Cross of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sister Ann Teresa Clifford of Divine Providence.

Sister Mary Sales Laurenson of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Sister Barbara Dufresne of the Immaculate Conception.

Lay-sisters :

Sister Martha Reeks of the Holy Family.

Sister Paul Fullwood of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sister Cicely Price of the Blessed Sacrament.

Sister Catherine Norris of the Holy Family.

Sister Loyola Seymour of the Blessed Sacrament.

Sister Frances Howard of the Holy Family.

Sister Alexia Poisman of the Passion.

Sister Cleophoe Marshall of the Immaculate Conception.

Sister Ann Straffen of the Dolours of Our Lady.

Sister Clare Evans of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sister Salome Parkinson of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sister Lucy Parkinson of the Holy Family.

Sister Magdalen Hargitt of St. Joseph, Novice.

Sister Agnes Brown of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Novice.

Priests :

Rev. Father Clifton and Rev. Father Gervais Genin.

Boarders :

Miss Catherine Meade,¹ Miss D. Strickland, Miss Angélique Molliette.

Servants :

Marie Jeanne Moërs and Poncette Delraye.

Pensioners :

Three Hon. Misses Plunket of Dunsany, Ireland.

Miss Louisa Fermour of Tusmore, Oxfordshire.

Miss C. Gerard of Garswood, Lancashire.

Miss Skerritt of Dublin.

Two Misses Macdonnell of Edinburgh.

Miss Eyre of Sheffield.

Miss Leckonby of Preston, Lancashire.

Mdlle. de Choiseuil of Angers, France.

Mdlle. Lohier de Berlize of Lorraine.

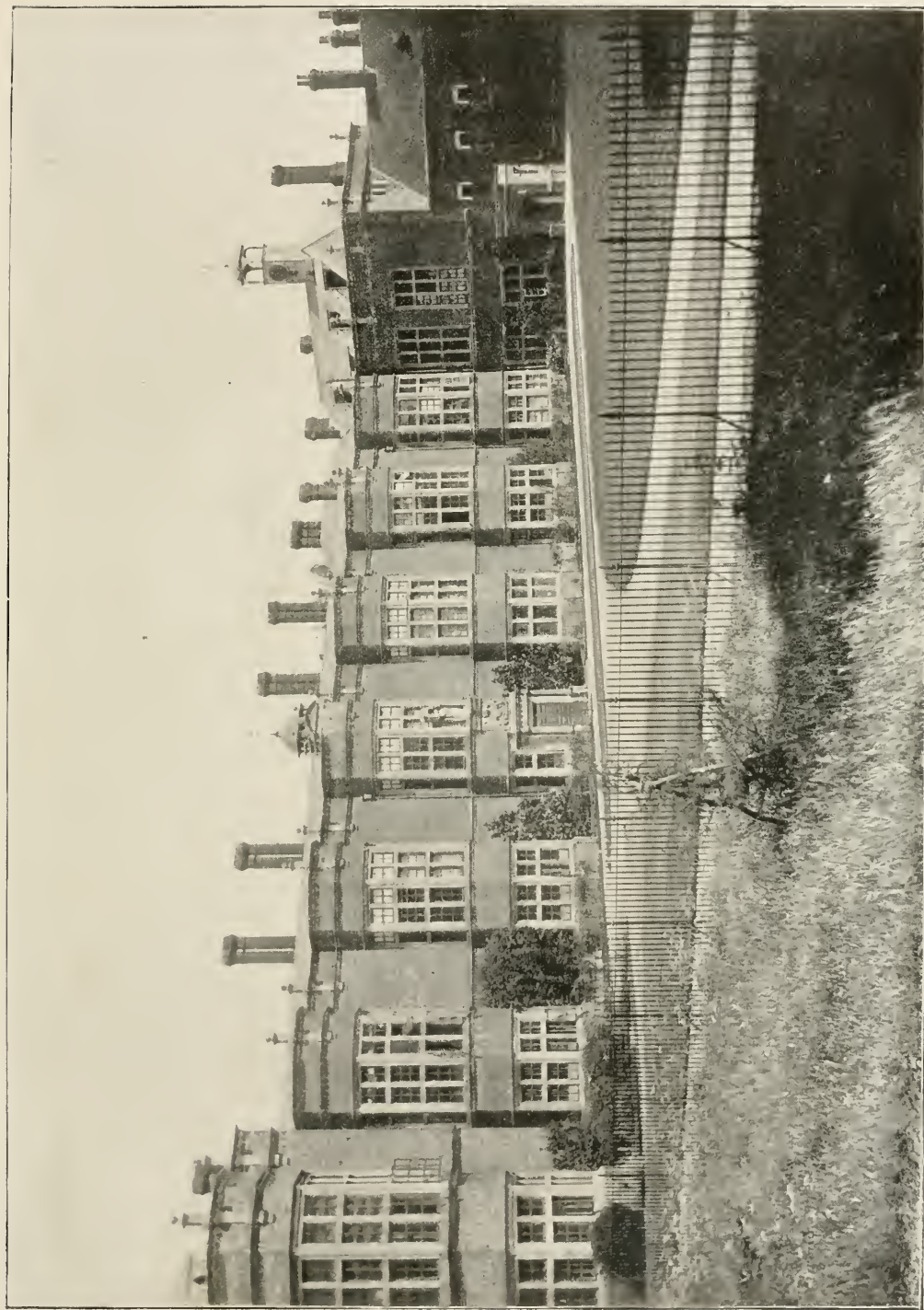
Mdlle. Olivier of Lorraine.

¹ This Miss Catherine Meade was sister to Mother Mechtilda Meade and Sister Agnes Meade. She ardently desired to become a nun, but her health was too delicate. She died in November, 1794. The Sisters Meade were cousins to Sister Mary Regis and Mother Gertrude Lynch whose mother was Judith Meade of Monserrat.

CHAPTER VII.

NEW HALL.

AFTER nearly five years of wandering the community at length found a home at New Hall in Essex, a house which has known more vicissitudes than perhaps any other in England. The reader will desire to know when the present structure was built; but this is a question not easily answered. A glance at the accompanying picture will show that the style of architecture is Elizabethan, and the date 1573 engraved on the west wing ought to settle the question, at least as to that portion of the building. It ought also to decide who the builder of it was, for in that year the Earl of Sussex obtained possession of New Hall. He must be considered to have built the portion of it that remains, or at least to have changed it considerably. It must be remembered that the front now standing was the north side of the great quadrangle, and the south side of another quadrangle. Perhaps the following brief sketch of the history of the house will throw some light on the difficulties of the question. For about 200 years New Hall belonged to the Augustinian Canons of Waltham Abbey, and on account of the salubrity of the air, it was chosen as a summer residence for the Abbots. They frequently used it as a house of entertainment for the royal persons who went to and from Harwich on their way to and from the Continent, its situation about half way between that port and London making it convenient for this purpose. Thus, Princess Maud, daughter of Henry II., affianced to Henry Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, was entertained here on her way to Holland. King John spent some time here, and nearly all the Norman kings did the same, until 1350, when the Abbey exchanged it for manors in its nearer neighbourhood. The exchange was made with Sir John de Shardelow, Knight, but Sir John soon parted with it to Sir Henry de Coggeshall in exchange for certain manors in Norfolk. The Coggeshalls held it for more than one generation, but not being able to keep up the place with sufficient splendour, they offered it for sale, and it was purchased by Margaret of Anjou, Queen of England, early in her reign, by the advice of Suffolk, and she is known to have



FRONT VIEW OF NEW HALL.

spent at least one month here. One, Alred, a dependant of Margaret, and probably the husband of Elizabeth de Coggeshall, leased it from the Queen. During the Wars of the Roses it remained Crown property, and was bestowed on the adherents of the rival houses accordingly as each was in the ascendant. Henry VII. confirmed the gift which Henry VI. had made of it to Thomas Boteler or Butler, Earl of Ormond, as a recompense for his fidelity, and that of his family, to the Lancastrian cause, and in the seventh year of his reign he granted him license to build there walls and a tower. He is said to have built these on the model of an Irish castle. The Earl left only two daughters, of whom Margaret, the eldest, was married to Sir William Boleyn, son of a Lord Mayor of London, and her son by him was Sir Thomas Boleyn, the father of Ann Boleyn. It has been printed more than once that Blessed Thomas More married the eldest daughter of Mr. Colt, who lived at New Hall, but we know that Nether Hall, likewise in Essex, was the residence of the Colt family from some date in the reign of Edward IV. to 1635. We know from other sources that the Blessed Martyr sometimes resided at New Hall with the Court, but the former statement is almost certainly a mistake.

Henry VII. purchased it in the ninth year of his reign, 1517, of Richard Fitz-James, Bishop of London, who held it by virtue of the will of Thomas, Earl of Ormond, but Camden says that he procured it of Thomas Boleyn, Earl of Wiltshire, by exchange. Henry was so charmed with the place, that he gave it the name of Beaulieu, which it did not long retain. He also erected it into an Honour and greatly adorned and improved it. He kept the feast of St. George here with great splendour with his whole Court in 1524. He built a noble gatehouse, which, with its turrets, was so extensive as to form the south side of the great quadrangle, the west side of which was the chapel, and the east a building that has a very ecclesiastical appearance in the pictures that remain. Over the gate were his arms carved in stone, supported by a dragon and greyhound, with this inscription under them :

Henricus rex octavus, rex inclitus armis,
Magnanimus struxit hoc opus egregium.

This inscription is supported by a lion and a hawk. Not only the arms and the supporters, but the foliage which adorns the groundwork, the royal crown, the crowned rose, the crowned pomegranate above, and the same uncrowned below, are very finely carved. The gateway was afterwards pulled down, and the arms were transferred to the interior of the great hall,

which is now used as a chapel. The framework of arms, helmets, and trophies was added when the arms were placed in their present position. They are of very inferior work to arms themselves.

Of all the royal persons who have resided at New Hall, Mary Tudor is not only the most interesting in herself, but also the one of whose residence here we know the most details. It was her favourite abode from the time of her separation from her mother in 1532 until close on her own accession to the throne in 1553. Here she had the consolation of the society of her mother's great friend, Blessed Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, who had held her in her arms for Baptism and Confirmation, and had been her state governess from her earliest childhood. In September, 1533, the Privy Council sent orders to Mary that she was to lay aside the name and dignity of Princess, and to retire to Hatfield, where the nursery of her sister Elizabeth was about to be established. This message was delivered to Mary at Beaulieu by her chamberlain, Hussey. She answered with a dignity worthy of her mother, that she "was not a little marvelled at his undertaking such a matter of high emprise as minishing from her state and dignity, she not doubting that she was the king's true daughter, born in good and lawful matrimony." She afterwards wrote to the Privy Council to the same effect, and also to the King. This letter is signed: "From your manor of Beaulieu, October 2nd. By your most humble daughter, Mary, Princess."

Mary succeeded in delaying the dissolution of her household at Beaulieu, until the beginning of 1534, but then the Parliament passed an Act, settling the Crown on the King's heirs by Anna Boleyn, and Mary's degradation was rendered legal. Her household at Beaulieu then consisted of 160 persons, and all these were dispersed. She was even separated from the Countess of Salisbury, and sent to the nursery palace of Hunsdon as an attendant of her infant sister. This was the period of her greatest affliction. Catherine of Arragon died on January 7th, 1536. After the execution of Anna Boleyn, and Henry's marriage with Jane Seymour, the Princess regained possession of New Hall, and in the summer of 1538 she sent to Queen Jane presents of "quails and cucumbs" from her favourite palace.

During her brother's minority, Mary was much molested with regard to her religion by the Privy Council. The Emperor Charles V. threatened to declare war with England if this continued, and during the summer of 1550 he sent ships to hover off the east coast, and in case his remonstrances were not heeded, to carry Mary to the protection of his sister the Queen of Hungary. New Hall is only nine miles from Maldon on the Blackwater, and

it was feared that she would embark from that port. The Privy Council tried to persuade Mary that the air of Essex was injurious to her. This was a polite manner of trying to induce her to leave New Hall, and she answered that her household were all in very good health, and though she had been ill herself, this was to be attributed to the fall of the leaf, a time of year when she rarely escaped an attack of illness. The great complaint against Mary at Court was that she would not have Mass with closed doors, but allowed the people to come in crowds to her chapel. At last she determined to appeal to her brother in person, but waited till the spring, when she was residing at Wanstead, which brought her nearer to London. From Wanstead she rode to Westminster, and there had her famous interview with the young King, in which, so he writes in his diary, "was declared how long I had suffered her Mass against my will, in hope of her reconciliation." He told her also that she "was to obey as a subject, not to rule as a sovereign." She answered that her soul was God's and her faith she would not change, offering to lay her head on the block in testimony of it. The brother and sister parted in a friendly manner, and on the following day Mary rode to New Hall and there continued to have her Mass without disturbance. The Blessed Sacrament was reserved in her chapel, as is proved by the blasphemy uttered by Lady Jane Grey, on one day in July, 1552, while she was Mary's guest at New Hall. Lady Jane Grey passed through the chapel with Lady Ann Wharton¹ a daughter of Robert, Earl of Sussex, and the wife of Sir Thomas Wharton, an officer of Mary's household. This lady, whose maiden name was Lady Ann Ratcliff, made a reverence or "curtsey" to the Blessed Sacrament. Lady Jane said, "Why do you curtsey, is the Lady Mary here?" Lady Ann Wharton answered, "I curtsey to Him that made me." Lady Jane said, "Nay, was He not made by the baker?" This hideous speech was reported to Mary, who is said never to have forgiven it, which is not surprising. Mary was still living at New Hall in May, 1553, but she was at Hunsdon when her brother died. She unfurled her standard at Framlingham, and in what may be called her triumphant march to London, she once more, and, so far as we know, for the last time, visited New Hall, and slept here on the night of August 1st or 2nd, 1553. The only relics that were found by the nuns of Mary's residence here were some of the old chapel benches, and some

¹ Miss Strickland seems to have fallen into a mistake in asserting that it was Lady Wharton, and not Lady Ann Wharton. She corrects herself by explaining that Lady Wharton was the wife of Sir Thomas Wharton, apparently not being aware that Sir Thomas married Lady Ann Ratcliff.

pewter tankards, curiously made, and marked with a portcullis not crowned. In the Boreham cemetery a tombstone of the year 1562 bears the inscription :

Betteris Apries landeres to Queen Mary.

It is well known that Mary was very fond of planting, and it is not impossible that some of the beautiful trees in the grounds may have been planted under her supervision.

We have no knowledge of any details of Elizabeth's visits here. Over the doorway of the present chapel are the arms of England in stone supported by a crowned lion and a dragon, and under them is the following inscription :

En terra più savia Regina. En Cielo la più lucente Stella.
Vergine Magnanima, Dotta, Divina, Legiadra, Honesta e Bella.

Until recently the words Viva Elizabetha ! stood over the arms, and Cariatides were on each side of them.

In February, 1561, Sir Thomas Wharton obtained a lease¹ of the house and park, and on the following May 29th, he was committed to the Tower for the crime of hearing Mass at New Hall, on Candlemas day that same year. An account of what happened is to be found in the "Examination of John Devon Clarke taken before John Darell Esq. one of the Queen's Matie's Justices of the Peace for the Countie of Kent the 17th of April of 1561."

First, the sayde John Devon dyd come to Sir Thomas Wharton's house (Knyghte) at New Hall in Essex on Candlemas Day last past, and upon Candlemas Daye saw Mr. Wharton and my Lady his wyffe with ii other gentlewomen and also the said John Devon being required to come up to hear Mass at a back door by one Jollye a Priest who said mass in latten in a chambre next to my ladye's chambre, at which mass they did have candels in their hands. And there was mynystered that day holly water and holly bread.

John Devon is elsewhere named John Coxe, *alias* Devon. He was a priest, for he got into trouble for saying Mass elsewhere. Sir Thomas Wharton remained for some months in the Tower, and then purchased his liberty by the payment of 100 marks. He seems to have been a prisoner at the time of his wife's death. She died at New Hall, June 7th, 1561, and was buried in the parish church at Boreham, June 14th. "She was as fayre a ladi as be" are the words that occur in one account of her death.

¹ For all these details connected with Sir Thomas Wharton we are indebted to the kindness of Mr. H. Reade, who has put the results of his researches in the Record Office at our disposal.

It is clear from this narrative that holy Mass could no longer be safely celebrated in the chapel where Mary Tudor had prayed so devoutly. It was now said at the opposite side of the house in or near Our Lady's Chapel. The priest was concealed in a barn, and was probably led in by what is now the cellar door, from thence up a flight of stairs the remains of which are visible. It seems safe to conclude that Lady Ann Wharton was a singularly devout Catholic. It was her reverence to the Blessed Sacrament that called forth Jane Grey's odious blasphemy, and now we find her not only incurring great danger and suffering for the sake of hearing Mass, but she was actually indicted for it as a crime. The fact that it was celebrated and the Blessed Sacrament reserved in a room so close to her bed-chamber is not without its suggestion as to her piety. We would willingly know more of her.

The two priests "John Coxe" and Jolly or Jollyff were imprisoned, and at the same time Lord Hastings was a prisoner in the Tower for hearing Mass at New Hall.

The following inventory of chapel furniture is preserved in the Record Office.¹

April 19, 1561. Enclosure in the letter of Lord Oxford to the Secretary of State, Sir William Cecill.

New Hall. An Inventorie of all such Implements of Superstition as were founde in the Chambre next to the Lady Wharton's Bedchamber.

First a roode of tymbre with Mary and John painted and parcell gilded.

Item, an altartable and paynted Image with a certayne prayer pro salute om̃i fidelium defunctor.

Item, a great plancke insteade of an altar with a superaltar upon the same and iii altar clothes to furnisie it.

Item, a crosse with Mary and John of copper and gilt and another crosse of copper beside the same.

Item, a chalice of silver, parcel gilt, with the pattens.

Item, ii littel candlesticks of silver and a holly watter payle and sprinkler of silver with holy water in the same.

Item, ii latten candlesticks with wax candels standing upon the altar with divers latten bookes as Masse Bookes and others.

Item, Palmstickes, candels of waxe, such as are commonly used at Candelmass, ashes, and a disciplining rod.

Item, a candelstick of latten to set in the Paschall light.

Item, a standing cup with a cover of silver all gilte insteade of a pyx, and

¹ State Papers, *Domestic*, Elizabeth, vol. xvi., 1561, n. 50, I.

therein a littel box of consecrated bread, with a canopy cloth of whyte taffeta garnished with a lace of gold, and iiij tassels wrought of silver partly and gold.

Item, a corporal case with a cloth in the same.

Item, a surplice and the vestments to say Mass in with two pieces of frankincense in the same.

Memor: The rods and pictures were left in the house by Queen Mary, and the rest of the premises except the gilt cup and holy water payle and the littel candelsticks were brought thither by John.

(Signed) THOMAS WHARTON.

The document is dated April 17th, third year of Elizabeth. It appears that on this very day the Earl of Oxford, as Lord Lieutenant of Essex, forcibly entered New Hall and took Sir Thomas Wharton prisoner. Lady Ann Wharton was then ill, and so was left to the care of her gentlewomen. Her name appears with that of Sir Thomas among the offenders indicted and convicted at the Commission of Oyer, held at Brentwood, Essex, before the Earl of Oxford, June 3rd, 1561.¹ This was only four days before her death, so that probably she was not present at the assizes. The sacrileges perpetrated close to her sick-room on April 17th, and the troubles of her husband were more than enough to cause her death.

In May, 1573, Elizabeth granted the honour of New Hall to Thomas Ratcliff, third Earl of Sussex, probably as a reward for the success of his campaign against the Northern Insurgents in 1569. This Earl of Sussex was the brother of Lady Ann Wharton. The Queen's arms mentioned above may well have been put up by him out of compliment to his benefactress.

The Earl seems to have altered the house to a great extent, and his arms are still to be seen on the ceilings of three of the dormitories. He married first Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and secondly, Frances, daughter of Sir William Sidney of Penshurst, the foundress of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Her brother Henry Sidney married Mary, daughter of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, sister of Dudley, Earl of Leicester. They were the parents of Sir Philip Sidney and his brother Robert, created Earl of Leicester by James I. The Porcupine, the original Sidney crest, is conspicuous in one of the dormitory passages, and over the chapel door under Queen Elizabeth's arms. Thomas, Earl of Sussex, died in 1583, and was buried at Boreham. He left no son, but was succeeded by his brother Henry. Henry and his wife Honor were both buried at Boreham, in 1593. Henry was succeeded by his son Robert, who also died

¹ State Papers, *Domestic*, Elizabeth, vol. xvi. (Enclosures 49 and 50.)

without issue surviving, though the parish register at Boreham shows that he had a son Thomas, born at New Hall, July 15th, 1597, and a daughter, Lady Honor, born August 27th, 1598, and the register records the precise hour of the birth of these two infants. Thomas died in 1619, and Honor in 1613. Earl Robert himself died in 1629, but in 1622 he sold New Hall for £30,000 to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who lived here with great state and magnificence. It was a favourite resort of Prince Charles and himself, and here Baby Charles and Steenie made their preparations for their expedition to Spain. It is interesting to us to know that the mother of the Duke was a Catholic. He was assassinated in 1627, and the following year his son George came into possession of New Hall, but he forfeited his estates for his loyalty to the King. He was declared a traitor by the Parliament after the Battle of Kingston-upon-Thames in 1648, and his estate was sold by Commissioners appointed for the purpose. Oliver Cromwell was allowed to purchase it for the sum of five shillings, though its computed yearly value was £1309 12s. 3½d. It is said that he sent the five shillings with a derisive message to the Duke of Buckingham. But New Hall was never meant to be the home of traitors, and Cromwell, finding it inconveniently distant from London, exchanged it in 1653 for Hampton Court, paying the difference. It was then sold to three wealthy citizens of London. John Evelyn gives the following description of a visit which he paid to New Hall in 1656.

I returned homeward passing through Colchester; and by the way neere the antient town of Chelmsford, saw New Hall, built in a parke by Henry VII. and VIII., and given by Queen Elizabeth to the Earle of Sussex, who sold it to the late great Duke of Buckingham, and since seized on by O. Cromwell (pretended Protector). It is a faire old house built with brick, low, being only of 2 stories, as the manner then was; the Gate-house better; the Court large and pretty; the staire-case of extraordinarie widenesse, with a piece representing Sir F. Drake's action in the year 1580, an excellent sea-piece; the galleries are trifling; the hall is noble, the garden a faire plot, and the whole seate well accommodated with water; but above all I admired the faire avenue planted with stately lime-trees in 4 rowes, for neere a mile in length. It has three descents, which is the only fault, and may be reform'd. There is another faire walk of the same at the mall and wilderness, with a tennis court, and pleasant terrace towards the park, which was well stored with deere and ponds. ¹

After the Restoration, New Hall became part of the reward of General Monk, Duke of Albemarle. During the last years of his life he frequently

¹ From Evelyn's diary.

entertained Charles II. and his Court here, and Cosmo III., Duke of Tuscany, visited him here in 1669. Monk died at New Hall on January 3rd, 1670, and was buried in Henry VII.'s chapel at Westminster, on April 30th following. He had much injured his fortune by the splendour with which he lived here. His son Christopher, second Duke of Albemarle, entertained James II. at New Hall in May, 1686, and so far as we know this was the last royal visit ever made to it. Christopher was made Governor of Jamaica in 1687, and died there the following year, leaving no children. His Duchess, Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, eldest daughter of Henry Duke of Newcastle, on whom New Hall was settled, was remarried in 1691, to Ralph, Duke of Montagu.

Benjamin Hoare, Esq., bought New Hall from the Duchess, and removed the marble, handsomest fixtures, and fine paintings to Boreham House, which he had built, and in 1737 he sold New Hall with the gardens, the park, and the fine avenue of lime-trees, to John Olmuis, Esq., who, after taking down a great part of the house, fitted up the remaining part, including the great hall, for a residence for himself. In 1752 he was created Baron Waltham of Phillipstown in the kingdom of Ireland, and dying on March 12th, 1762, was succeeded by his eldest son, the second Lord Waltham, from whose executors the nuns purchased it. He died in debts contracted by his expenditure on the house and grounds. It is said that his creditors would not allow him to be buried for many years, but that eventually his body was placed in the family mausoleum in the Boreham cemetery.

A word should be said about the devices which were in various parts of the house when the nuns came, most of which still remain. The stone dragon which now stands in the grounds was then on the top of the house looking west. It is almost certainly one of the two dragons which stood on the gates erected by Henry VIII. When Lord Waltham pulled down this gateway, he probably transferred it to the exalted position in which the nuns found it. It was taken down when the roof was repaired in 1854. The Tudors were very fond of the red dragon of the Princes of Wales.

The arms of the Earl of Sussex occur three times in plaster work in rooms which now form the children's dormitories. They are as follows :

1. A bend ingrailed for Ratcliff.
2. A fess between two chevrons for Fitzwalter.
3. A lion rampant crowned within a bordure. Burnell.
4. A saltire ingrailed. Botecourt.

5. Three lucies hauriant. Lucy.
6. Three bars. Multon.
7. Semee Fleurs de lis. Mortimer of Attilborough.
8. An eagle and child. Culcheth.

These arms and quarterings were carved in stone over the door leading to the old chapel.

Over the door leading to the hall, that is the door by which the children now enter the chapel, which was once an outer door, were the arms and quarterings of Frances Sidney, Countess of Sussex.

1. A Pheon. Sidney.
2. Two bars, in chief three shields. Clunford.
3. Chevronelles; a label of three points. Barrington.
4. On a bend three lozenges. Mercy.
5. Quarterly an escarbuncle. Mandeville.
6. A chevron between three mullets. Chetwynd.
7. Three lions rampant. Baard.
8. Barry of eight, a lion rampant crowned. Brandon.

On the centre round panel or medallion of the great hall, now the chapel, were the arms of Lord Waltham. These were removed when the chapel was first decorated, and a dove was put in their place. On the four small panels or medallions now adorned with large gilt double crosses, were Lord Waltham's black boys, four in each panel, their heads pointing north, south, east, and west. By the advice of the architect, Mr. Scoles, the cherubs in medallions surrounded by rays, which had been used to support chandeliers, were retained, and one couple of them still hold the chain of the sanctuary lamp.

The large stained glass window now in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, was for about 200 years in the chapel of New Hall. It has a curious history, some of the details of which are obscure to us now. It is said to have been intended by King Ferdinand of Arragon and Queen Isabel of Castille as a present to Henry VII. for the decoration of his chapel in Westminster Abbey, and to have been commemorative of the marriage of Prince Arthur with Catherine of Arragon. The work was entrusted to some expert glass painters at Gonda in Holland, but the magistrates of Dort were graciously permitted to pay for it. Another account states that it was originally destined for a present to Henry VII., by the magistrates of Dort, perhaps out of gratitude for some loan of money made to them by that King. Henry VII. died before

the completion of the window, and Henry VIII. either gave or sold it to the Augustinian Canons of Waltham Abbey, with whom it did not remain long, for at the dissolution of the Abbey it was transferred to Beaulieu, as New Hall was then called, and here it remained in the chapel until the breaking out of the Civil Wars. Then, to save it from the destructive tendencies of the Puritans, it was buried underground, but was replaced in the chapel after the restoration by General Monk, Duke of Albemarle, and there it remained until Mr. Olmuis, the first Lord Waltham, sold it to Mr. Conyers of Copthall for £50. Some years later, in 1758, it was purchased of him by the parishioners of St. Margaret's, Westminster, for 400 guineas, and thus it reached a spot very near that for which it was first destined.

The window represents the Crucifixion, with the thieves on either side of our Blessed Lord, not nailed but tied to their crosses, and above them saints and angels holding the instruments of the Passion. The side-lights are occupied by figures of St. George and St. Catherine, and beneath them are almost certainly Henry VIII. and Catherine of Arragon, though some accounts say they are Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York, and others will have it that Arthur, Prince of Wales, is one and Catherine the other. There can be little doubt that the female figure represents Catherine, as the saint of her name stands above her, and still higher is the crowned pomegranate vert on a field or. Arthur died in 1501, and, as the window came over to England not before 1509, it is not likely that he would be represented without some sign of its being a memorial window, nor would Catherine be represented without some sign of her widowhood. If St. George and St. Catherine could be made out to be portraits of Henry VII. and Elizabeth, it would bring the accounts into better agreement. One account mentions that the centre of the window representing the Crucifixion was all that formed the present of the magistrates of Dort, and that the side-lights were ordered by Henry VIII., when he transferred the window to New Hall, and that he also sent portraits belonging to the English Court to be copied in Holland. The exact position that this window occupied at New Hall is shown in the engraving of the house as it was in 1660. It was the east window of the chapel, and must have been placed as nearly as possible where the window of the first class is now. The whole of that wing was longer than it is now, and formed the west side of the front quadrangle. The opposite or east side of the quadrangle has windows that look more ecclesiastical than those of the chapel itself.

When New Hall came into the possession of the nuns there was a "canal," as it is called in the deed of conveyance. It was at the back of

the house, as may be seen in an old picture still preserved, and was a relic of the old moat. The first change the nuns made was to drain off this canal, for the sake of the school, both for fear of accidents and because so much water near the house was not considered healthy.

There were also at that time four rows of lime-trees lining the avenue, said to have been planted in royal times or before. These the nuns have been reproached with selling, but the nuns did not purchase them with the property; they only engaged to leave them standing till they found a purchaser. In the end these magnificent trees, "the pride and boast of the neighbourhood" as they are called in a local description of them, were sold for a sum much below the price at first put upon them. The trees in the pleasure grounds were very beautiful, and there were great numbers of flowering shrubs, especially many varieties of roses of various hues, some of them of great size, and very many "York and Lancaster" roses. These were a very favourite sort of rose in the days of the Tudors, and the nuns thought they might have come from those planted then. There were several pretty summer-houses about the grounds, and the bill of sale mentions a green-house, graperies, and a pinery. The green-house was where the Pavilion is now. There were pipes for hot water through the whole length of the double hollow wall between the two gardens.

It may interest those who know the present house to learn that the Pink room was a drawing-room, the second class-room a breakfast-room, the first class-room a library, and the old "coal hole" that was done away with in 1870, verified what was said of it by school tradition, *i.e.*, it was a large bath lined and paved with marble. Perhaps, after all, the rest of the tradition may be true, and that it may have been Henry VIII.'s bath. The work-room is described as a large and lofty drawing-room, the blue-room was a billiard-room, the sacristy in all probability a dining-room. Strange to say there is no mention in the bill of sale of the beautifully decorated room apparently once a bed-room, and which some sort of tradition points to as Queen Elizabeth's bed-room. This room was at once set apart for an oratory, containing a Holy Sepulchre and a statue of Our Lady, and it has been devoted to the same holy purpose ever since. It was probably in or near this room that the Holy Sacrifice was celebrated on February 2nd, 1561, and that the sacred vessels were seized on April 17th, the same year.

CHAPTER VIII.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD LIÉGE NUNS.

Now that the community has been settled at New Hall there is no further attempt at keeping a record. Evidently Mother Joseph knew that a long period of trouble had begun when she began her account in 1789, and she considered this period to be over when the cells were built at New Hall. It is a pity, for we should now be quite as much interested in the early days of New Hall as in the migration itself. However, many of the nuns who took part in the journey survived to a good old age, and there are those still living who remember some of them, so that we can hardly do better than devote a few pages to recollections of these old nuns, beginning by the Reverend Mother, but continuing without any special order.

REVEREND MOTHER ALOYSIA CLOUGH is said to have united the sweetness of Reverend Mother Christina with the firmness of Reverend Mother Austin. Another opinion of the old Liège nuns was that she was especially called by God's good Providence for the work of conducting her large community through the difficult migration. She had always been remarkable for her spirit of recollection and prayer, and this never failed her, so that nothing put her out in the least, and her quiet self-possession was a great support to all. She succeeded in promoting the same spirit among her subjects. It was she who was most averse to the purchase of Clarence House, because, being so near London, she feared the dissipating effect of frequent visitors. She was exceedingly beloved, and so well obeyed, that the deference of all to her slightest wish is said to have been perfect, so that when we read in the account of the journey that "we" wished this or that, it is to be understood that "we" desired to carry out Reverend Mother's wishes. During that anxious and embarrassing time, every fresh arrangement was made known to the community by some such words as: "Reverend Mother would like so and so to be done." She was very simple and genial in her manner. "Oh, she was such a mother," was frequently said of her after her

death. She would express her pleasure by a hearty, child-like exclamation when any of her subjects had achieved success in decorating an altar or in any other way. She had a special gift for keeping the community together in perfect peace and concord. It seems a wonderful thing now that in the unsettled state they were in while in London, though many of the nuns had relatives in London who were willing and anxious to receive them, not one of them separated from the others for so much as a day, except for the short time that they were living in Burlington Street and Dover Street.

Reverend Mother Aloysia had the greatest zeal for the Divine Office. She used to say that but for the disturbance it would create she would like to die in the choir while the Office was going on. She had a fine contralto voice and used to sing very well, even in her old age. In appearance she was of middle size with dark eyes and dark complexion. She was ten years older than her predecessor, both in age and in Religion, being forty-eight when she was elected. She died on July 6th, 1816. Mother Agatha Laurenson has left on record that from the time of her death to that of the election of her successor she seemed to be still among her community, so great was the attention of all, from the Subprioress downwards, to act precisely as they thought she would have wished. The Subprioress was then Mother Ignatia Dennett, the elder of the two nieces of Reverend Mother Christina.

MOTHER HELEN TALBOT of the Holy Cross was the Subprioress at the time of the migration. She was professed on March 19th, 1756, at eighteen years of age. Though not a novice under Reverend Mother Christina, she had known her well and thoroughly imbibed her spirit. Like many of the nuns of that time she was a person of great prayer, and is said to have been much favoured by God. It has always been believed that she was one of those who received special warnings from God that the community were to be in readiness to leave their convent. Several of the others are credited with having received similar warnings. This is so true that there was a good deal of joking from the Fathers of the "Academy" at the preparations made under the influence of pious imaginations, and these are alluded to in Father John Laurenson's MS., but the joke was turned against them when in the end the nuns were so much better prepared than they were for the journey. Mother Helen had a very joyous spirit, and indeed the whole community seems to have had a share of the same happy frame of mind. They used to say that they were never so joyful as during the hardships of that journey, and the more uncomfortable they were, the more they laughed. Mother Helen was always remarkable for her love of the Cross.

One of her little practices was to pray for a cross every day, and this prayer, she used to say jokingly, was always granted. She had a great devotion to St. Peter of Alcantara, and used to say that he always sent her a great cross on his feast. On one of his feasts she was sad at night recreation, and said, "Ah, my dear Saint has forgotten me; he has not sent me my cross." The words were scarcely out of her lips when Reverend Mother sent for her. She came back in tears, but said, smiling: "Ah, my dear Saint has not forgotten me. He has sent me a cross, and a very heavy one." What it was has not come down to us. Mother Helen died at New Hall on April 20th, 1803, just as she had completed her third five years as Subprioress.

MOTHER FRANCIS XAVERIA TRANT was Procuratrix at the same eventful time, *i.e.*, from 1792 to 1797, when the nuns were at Dean House. Here she was made first Mistress, and received her first pupils, who were Miss Goldie and Christina Clifford, afterwards Mrs. Humphrey Weld. She had a sister in the community, named Sister Benedict Joseph, and an aunt named Mother Christina. The last two had remarkable talent for painting. They came from the Island of Antigua. Sister Benedict Joseph died at Dean House, December 11th, 1797, and Mother Christina died at New Hall, May 18th, 1811. Mother Francis Xaveria was very talented in many ways, and had a very good head for business. She was also extremely holy, very amiable, and imposing in appearance, and used to be spoken of as altogether a superior person and a very lovable one. She was Procuratrix again at New Hall, and she did very good service to the community by her exertions to obtain that the right of road close to the house should be cancelled. She had nearly completed her term of office when she died on February 7th, 1807, aged forty-three.

MOTHER MARY JOSEPH SMITH, the Mistress of Novices, has already been introduced to the reader as the author of the memoir of Reverend Mother Christina. No one can fail to perceive that her own interior spirit is shown in every page of that memoir. Of Mother Joseph it used to be said that if the Constitutions were lost, they might be re-written by merely studying her example. She has left behind her a reputation for very uncommon sanctity, especially for a remarkable gift of prayer and recollection. She was Procuratrix at Liège from the death of Mother Benedict Berington in November, 1786, to 1792, and again in England from 1797 to 1802, and for over two years more from the death of Mother Francis Xaveria Trant, to Easter, 1809. Besides the memoir of Reverend Mother Christina, we are indebted to her for the account of the migration, and also for the only letters

of Father Howard which have been preserved. She died May 3rd, 1811. In her memoir of Mother Christina she gives a long account of a person known by that holy nun to have been in Purgatory for nine years. This person was Mr. Thomas Smith, the father of Mother Joseph and Mother Berchmans. The two sisters were told by Mother Christina to pray for him, and the younger sister, not yet professed, was to give an alms. Mr. Smith, as his daughter remarked, had always been considered the best of Christians, he had always been exact in fulfilling the duties of his station, and though a man of business, with a vast amount of temporal affairs to attend to, he had never for many years failed to dedicate two hours, or at least an hour and a half, to prayer every day; that he regularly approached the Sacraments every month, watched carefully over his family, insisted on the observance of due regularity therein, was remarkably charitable to the poor; and his death was as edifying as his life was virtuous. Reverend Mother Christina only answered that this should teach us not to leave off praying for our deceased relatives and friends. After some weeks she told Mother Joseph that her father was now in Heaven. Mother Joseph died on May 5th, 1811.

MOTHER MARY BERCHMANS was a good, simple, fervent soul. She was something of an invalid. She painted extremely well, sometimes on velvet for the church. She was sacristan when the nuns came over. She lived to be seventy-six. She died June 24th, 1827.

MOTHER GERTRUDE LYNCH was first Mistress of the school. She had much trouble in disposing of the fifty girls or so in preparation for the flight. As it was, twenty-five started with the nuns, though only fourteen accompanied them to London. They gave a great deal of anxiety to their Mistress, who was very gentle and sensitive. She died at Dean House, on December 29th, 1797, aged about forty-three. A sister of hers, SISTER MARY REGIS LYNCH, had died at Liège at the age of twenty-four, on September 10th, 1783.

As the practice of obituary notices has never been in vogue in our community, it is not surprising that about some few of these travellers from Liège details are absolutely wanting. This is especially to be regretted in the case of MOTHER MARY TERESA DENNETT, elder sister to our revered Mother Mary Christina, and of her two nieces, MOTHER IGNATIA and MOTHER STANISLAUS DENNETT, who are all three spoken of as having been very holy. Mother Mary Teresa was at one time Novice Mistress. She died during the brief stay of the community in London. Mother Stanislaus was long remembered as a most successful teacher, and Mother Ignatia was very useful in the offices of the house. Mother Stanislaus died in 1816, and Mother Ignatia in 1825.

Of MOTHER MAGDALEN CHAMPNEY, MOTHER CONSTANTIA ROPER, MOTHER BAPTIST STUTTER, and MOTHER JULIANA HALES, we unfortunately know still less. All we are told is that they were very good Religious.

MOTHER ALOYSIA JOSEPH WRIGHT was always spoken of as the most lovable of characters, full of tenderness and affectionate sympathy for all. She was also a most delightful companion at recreation, able to converse amusingly on every subject, except that she seemed even incapable of uttering an uncharitable word.

MOTHER URSULA SEMMES was truly a valiant woman, a model of regularity. When old and infirm, suffering from bad legs, she still insisted on rising at four a.m., and going to Matins regularly. She was much given to prayer and recollection. She was Subprioress once or twice, and at least once Mistress of Novices. Some of her instructions to her novices have survived her. She was a very simple soul. When Lady N—— entered as a postulant, her conversation savoured somewhat of worldliness. Mother Ursula could not understand it, and one day at recreation she turned to one of the novices, and said, "My dear, who is this Etiquette that she keeps talking about?" She was most deeply venerated by her former novices all through their lives.

MOTHER ANN XAVERIA WEBBE was a niece of Mother Regis and Mother James Tankred. She was one of Reverend Mother Christina Dennett's novices, and made very good use of her holy instructions. She was Mistress of Novices to Reverend Mother Regis Gerard, Mother Chantal Reynolds, and others, all of whom spoke of her with the greatest affection and reverence, as of an exceptionally holy person. She just survived all the changes, and died at New Hall, March 2, 1801.

A longer paragraph must be devoted to MOTHER MARY ANNE HEAD, to whom the community owes much. Her father's name was Moses Mendes. He was a Portuguese Jew by birth, but had been baptized, and was a Protestant by profession. He married Ann Gabriella, second daughter and one of the three co-heirs of Rev. Sir Francis Head, and the children assumed the name of Head. They had three children, two charming little sons, who were idolized by their mother, and a daughter who was so ill-favoured as to be a disappointment, and an object of aversion to her worldly mother. This child, whose name was Mary, was sent as an infant to a farmer's wife, to be brought up in the country, as was common in those days. She became much attached to her good foster-parents, and when at eight or nine years of age she returned to her father's house, one of the greatest of her early troubles was that when Daddy and Mammy Ridley called to see her, no civility was shown them. Mary

was quite neglected, was much alone, and suffered a great deal from hunger and from all kinds of privations. A beautiful painting of our Lady hung in her father's house. She did not know it was our Blessed Lady, but felt that there was something supernatural about the person represented, and used to ask her to pity her and help her. In after-years she believed our Lady had heard her prayers. She told many anecdotes of her childhood, to illustrate how completely she was neglected. Once she joined a party of girls who were selling lavender in the streets, and sold with them, but she was recognized by some acquaintance, and taken home. Another time, when she was very hungry, a grand supper was prepared for her mother, who was at the Opera. She watched her opportunity, and carried off a chicken, which she ate, and then sewed up the bones in a straw mattress. She never heard that the chicken was missed, or the bones discovered.

Whether her father was living at this time or not we do not know, but he certainly died when she was still a child, for when she was about thirteen her mother married again, and this time she married a Catholic, Captain Roper, a relative of Mother Constantia Roper. Mr. Roper felt for his desolate step-daughter, and interested himself in her. He went with his family to Spa for the waters one season, and with his wife's consent put his daughter to school in our convent at Liége on February 10th, 1772. This was at the very time that Reverend Mother Christina was beginning to enlarge the school. It was also the year that Mother Constantia Roper was professed. Mary never left the convent again unless it may have been for some holiday. She was instructed and received into the Church by Father Howard, and in time was favoured by God with a religious vocation. She received the habit on May 21st, 1798. She suffered from her family even after this, for she was not able to obtain some money which was due to her. This valiant soul knew that the community needed the money, and though full of fervent desire to give herself to God, she chose to put off her Profession until she could obtain it. Thus she was clothed September 15th, 1778, and not professed until June 2nd, 1788. No one now seems able to explain how it was that she got the money by waiting in the convent unprofessed, and that the community would not have got it had she been professed, but there must have been some good reason, for her delay has been extolled ever since as an act of extreme generosity and abnegation on her part. All through her long religious life she was distinguished for her intense gratitude for her conversion and vocation. She used to say in a comical way that she owed both to her ugly face. She never lost her love of adventure. She is said to have watched

a battle from an attic window at Liége,¹ and on the journey she was lost in a wood with some other nuns, and once again by herself. Yet she was not at all below the mark in recollection, and prayer, and religious observance. She was a sterling good nun in every way, full of devotion, and full of zeal for the choir. She was one of the musicians of the house, and a good teacher in the school. She lived till May 13th, 1837. Just before she received the last Sacraments, a small looking-glass was given to her to help her to arrange her head-dress neatly. She exclaimed, on seeing herself: "Oh, you dear, ugly nose and chin—what happiness you have brought me!" We should probably never have heard of her personal appearance if she had not been made so well aware of it when she was a child. She was short, very dark, and in her extreme old age her nose and chin that she loved so much, nearly met. Her countenance is said to have been good-natured and pleasing.

MOTHER AGATHA LAURENSEN was one of those "well-qualified persons" mentioned by Mother Joseph, who entered the Noviceship at the time that Reverend Mother Christina Dennett was enlarging and improving the school. She was born at Witham, in Essex, and was a daughter of Mr. James Laurenson, who came from Lancashire, and of Martha Coleman from Hampshire. She was at school at Liége. She received the habit on July 30th, 1772, when only fourteen and a half. She told of herself that, one day, feeling hungry, she asked leave to eat between meals, but was refused, upon which she cried bitterly. She was clothed on September 26th, 1773, and professed on September 27th, 1774, aged sixteen and ten months. She was the first of her family to join the community, and she was followed in course of time by her half-sister and her two nieces. Mother Agatha was sister to Father John Laurenson, S.J., and half-sister to Father James Laurenson, S.J. Brother Foley says that these two were probably uncle and nephew, but they were certainly step-brothers, and Father James was brother to Sister Mary Sales Laurenson the elder, who was still a novice when they left Liége. Both these Fathers were frequent and very welcome visitors at New Hall in after-years, and some of Father John Laurenson's letters to Mother Agatha are still preserved.

She was employed in the school almost from the first. She loved children, and they loved her, indeed Father Clifton used to scold her for letting them be too demonstrative to her, but she was naturally expansive and tender to everyone. She was interested in all the studies, and is said to have known something of everything. Besides French, Italian, and German, she knew

¹ This must have been the battle mentioned in page 91.

Latin well, and at any rate some Greek, and had some knowledge of Spanish. She used to sing Flemish songs, and also songs in the Liége *patois*. She could read so fluently from French or Italian into English in the refectory or elsewhere, that no one would have suspected that the text before her was not English. When some of her relatives wished to make her a present, they could think of none more suitable than the large globes which still stand in the first class; and the orrery. She was at different times Mistress of the first class, and first Mistress of the school. She also filled the office of Subprioress for the usual term of five years. Mother Agatha had a splendid choir voice, both for singing and reciting. It was rich and musical, so that both in the choir and refectory it was a treat to hear her. Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph used to wish that the younger nuns of her day could have heard Mother Agatha entone or recite, for she used to put so much expression into the words that all were lifted up by it. She instanced the words "*Crede ergo Evangelistæ*," in the Office of Christmas night, which she recited as though she were determined to convince the whole world. She loved the Divine Office, and her zeal found scope when she was chantress, as she was frequently both at Liége and elsewhere. Perhaps her most distinguishing virtue was her great humility. In her old age her mind became partially impaired. She was aware of it, and used to smile sweetly and say, "*Bonum mihi quia humiliasti me*." She died on August 4th, 1834.

Mother Agatha's half sister, MARY SALES, was born at Witham in Essex. Her mother's name was Martha Martin, from Suffolk. Mary Laurenson was sent to school at Liége, and arrived there on July 14th, 1788, aged eleven. She took the habit when she was sixteen, on November 3rd, 1793. She had to fly with the community in the following May, and was clothed at Holme Hall, on November 8th, 1795. She was professed at Dean House on November 1st, 1798, aged twenty-one, and she finished her noviceship at New Hall. She was not unlike Mother Agatha in her gifts of mind. She taught in the school, and was for a time Procuratrix. She was very fervent. Her death came about in a curious way. One item of the costume which the nuns wore before they considered it safe to resume the habit, was that they wore buckles on their shoes. Mother Mary Sales wounded her face with one of these buckles when she was kissing the nuns' feet, and her blood being in a bad state, she died of the wound, on July 12th, 1812.

MOTHER ANGELA HILL arrived at school at Liége on May 11th, 1781, when she was about thirteen years of age. Tradition tells us that she was then very short, slight and fair, and had an extraordinary abundance of very light hair,

which came down to her feet. She looked like a little fairy, and her disposition matched her appearance, for she was singularly light-hearted, joyous, and sweet and kind to all. In her old age she was still very attractive. All through her community life she was like some angelic child. Everybody loved her. It would be impossible to imagine a more simple, obedient, loving soul. She was like sunshine, both in the school and the community. Some stories of her noviceship days have survived. The following is one. One day, when passing by the garden-door, she began to play with some kind of wheel chair that was standing there, pushing it backwards and forwards, &c. Reverend Mother Austin Westby caught her thus uselessly employed, scolded her for wasting her time, and told her for her penance to go so many times round the garden with the chair. She began to do this, but one of the elder girls, a Miss Nihill, ran out of the school-door and said: "Oh, Sister Mary Angela, jump in, and I will give you a ride." She jumped in without a thought, and had her ride, and when she got to the garden-door Sister Mary Agatha was waiting for her, and said, gravely, "Reverend Mother says you may leave off your penance."

Mother Angela had a beautiful voice, and she delighted in the choir. At school she had great facility in all her studies, and as a nun she taught a great deal in the school. At New Hall she was alternately Subprioress and Mistress of Novices for a considerable time. One of her former novices has left recorded that, on one occasion, being very unwell, she was sent to lie down in her cell. *Angelus* rang, and for a moment she hesitated whether to rise and say it or not, but she did get up, and said it. The next time she was at recreation, Mother Angela said in a playful way, "Somebody made an effort to get up to say her *Angelus* when she was sick, and God wants her to know, that even this little act of self-denial will have its reward in eternity." Mother — said that no one could have known this naturally, and it had given her courage to do better things over and over again since.

On one Christmas night the nuns were coughing incessantly, and someone said next day that it had distracted her very much, but Mother Angela said it reminded her of the shepherd's dog. It did not distract her more than the dog would have distracted them. She was never known to say an uncharitable word. In her old age she was fond of talking of the old Liége nuns, and she always did it with intense reverence. Even her verdict as to Mother Austin's strictness had to be extracted from her. She said, "Yes, she was a strict Superior, but it was because Reverend Mother Christina had left everything in such a perfect state that she was afraid of any falling off." The

spirit of prayer was then quite out of the common, she used to say, and obedience and charity absolutely perfect. Her own obedience was quite remarkable. She gave up her own judgment with as much ease as if she had none, and showed no wish but to conform herself to the judgment and slightest wish of her Superiors. She was perfect in the observance of her rule, and in fidelity to prayer. In her old age she became quite blind, and she bore her suffering state with great patience and cheerfulness. It was an edifying sight to see old Mother Austin Archdeacon leading her about. Mother Angela died on April 12th, 1842.

MOTHER FRANCIS BORGIA and MOTHER MARY XAVERIA CROSS or TRISTRAM were young professed when they left Liége. They were sisters of Father Joseph Tristram, S.J., who died at New Hall, in 1843. It has generally been supposed here that Tristram was the real family name, and Cross the *alias*, but Brother Foley says the reverse, which is probably true. They were at school at Liége for a short time. Mother Borgia taught in the school in her young days. They were both very holy. Mother Xaveria was distinguished for her great simplicity. She died on December 23rd, 1804, and Mother Borgia on June 23rd, 1820.

MOTHER CHANTAL REYNOLDS was professed with Sister Joseph Sales Chichester, December 8th, 1790. She was a model of exactitude and obedience, and was brimful of piety, recollection, and prayer. She was nervous in mind and manner, and this weakness was attributed to a bad burn which she had when an infant. She was Procuratrix at different times, both for the school and the house, and clever and remarkably amiable in both offices. She was very fond of spiritual conversation. She died on August 11th, 1842, aged seventy-three. She was only twenty-five at the time of the migration.

MOTHER ALOYSIA STANISLAUS M'EVVOY is one of whom we would gladly know more than we do. She was from the island of Ste. Croix. She and her sister Biddy went to school at Liége, arriving there on July 21st, 1780. She was a good Religious, exact and regular, but for some years before her death she was confined to the infirmary. She was subject to great fear of the judgments of God, but was in great peace before her death. She was well educated, and also painted very well. A Mass set and altar frontal painted by her on white velvet, survived to quite modern times. She died on February 3rd, 1835. We owe New Hall to the generosity of her brother, as has been told in its proper place. It is curious that she should have died on the anniversary of the day on which Mass was said here for the first time.

MOTHER ALOYSIA and MOTHER AUSTIN ARCHDEACON were professed together on June 17th, 1792. They were both intensely pious, and full of spiritual things. They were credited with being rather visionary. Mother Aloysia used to relate Mother Austin's favours, and Mother Austin would tell Mother Aloysia's, for they always confided in one another. The favours were of daily occurrence, and taken as a matter of course, but though there was a good deal of joking about them, the two sisters were so very holy and simple, that the nuns thought there was no reason to doubt them, only they were things that could not generally be verified. The following, however, is true. Mother Austin said one day to one of two sisters, nuns in the community, "My dear, I want you to make a special point for the next few weeks of praying much for resignation to God's holy Will, and making acts of the same, and tell Sister —," naming her sister, "to do the same, for I think God is going to send you a heavy cross." A week or two after, the father and brother of these two nuns died very quickly one after the other. Both the sisters had a most ardent and tender devotion to the Sacred Heart. All the Liége nuns had, from Reverend Mother Christina Dennett's time, but these two sisters were all fire and flames for it. They were young professed when they left Liége.

Another young professed should be mentioned, and this is SISTER TERESA JOSEPH FERMOUR of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Hers was not a very long life, for she died in 1806. She was only twenty-three at the time of leaving Liége. She was very gifted both in mind and body, and was much beloved and well remembered by all who had known her.

The two best remembered of the whole party were the two who in course of time became Prioresses. These were SISTER MARY REGIS GERARD and SISTER ALOYSIA AUSTIN CLIFFORD. Elizabeth Gerard was daughter of Sir Robert Gerard and Catherine Anderton. We find from our school register that she was at school at Liége from June 10th, 1785, to August 10th, 1787, but her first school was the Bar at York, and she was afterwards for a time at Ghent. From Liége she was sent to Montargis for about a year. All her life she retained a great affection for this convent, but her vocation was for the Holy Sepulchre, and she returned to Liége on August 3rd, 1788, and took the habit on September 14th, taking for her name "Mary Regis of the Infant Jesus." She entered upon her novitiate with great fervour. Then, and all through her life, she was distinguished for her great alacrity and energy in all kinds of manual labour, but she used to own that it did cost her something to help to make black puddings, which it seems formed an item in the diet

of the house at Liége on one day of the week. She told the younger nuns how she and her fellow-novices used to be up to their elbows in blood while engaged in this work. The lay-sister in charge of the kitchen thought it her duty to give disagreeable work to the choir-novices when sent to help in the kitchen, so she made Sister Mary Regis draw a fowl, and she did it without showing any signs of disgust. She was professed on May 1st, 1790, at nineteen years of age, so that she was about twenty-three at the time of the departure. She had been much employed in the school, and had succeeded well. Soon after coming to New Hall, she was made first Mistress, and she occupied that post and that of Procuratrix until she was made Prioress in 1816. She succeeded a Prioress who was universally beloved, yet it may be doubted if any Superior ever more completely won the love and confidence of her subjects, or the affection and esteem of all who came in contact with her. She had great gifts of mind and heart. She had such courage as to be afraid of nothing, and yet great tenderness for the weaknesses of others. Even when quite young she had great self-control, and was never seen to cry, so that when at the death of Mother Francis Xaveria Trant her tears flowed freely, some surprise was felt, though all were in full sympathy with the cause of her affliction. Yet she was most tender and affectionate. Something more will be said of her later.

MOTHER ALOYSIA AUSTIN CLIFFORD was the eighth child and the eldest daughter of Hon. Thomas Clifford of Ugbrooke, and Hon. Barbara Aston, younger daughter and co-heir of James, Lord Aston. She and her three sisters, Lucy, who married Thomas Weld, Esq., afterwards Cardinal Weld, Mary, who became Lady Wolesley, and Constantia, Countess Clifford, were all, for a time at least, at school at Liége, but Ann Clifford was at one time at the Fossés St. Victor.¹ She had from her childhood been most strongly attracted to religious life, and had made a vow of chastity, but she was not allowed to follow her vocation at once. She was very much liked and admired in society, and though she does not seem to have been infatuated with the world, after a time she allowed herself to be persuaded that her vow had not been well considered, and to obtain a dispensation from it in order to accept an engagement to Sir Robert Gerard, Reverend Mother Regis' eldest brother, but in a few days he was seized with a violent fever, and died very quickly; Ann took this as a sign that she had been unfaithful to the call of God, and entered the Noviceship at Liége as soon as she possibly could. Reverend Mother Regis was extremely fond of her eldest brother, and years after

¹ The English convent of Regular Canonesses of St. Augustine, now at Neuilly.

she was known to say in a half-jocose way in presence of Mother Aloysia Austin, "I wish people would follow their vocations, and let other people's brothers live." Ann threw herself into her vocation with her whole heart. She had the most exalted views of religious life, and in practice never deviated from her high standard. She was always remarkable for her great detachment and love of holy poverty. It was said that her cell was always the very poorest in the house, and she was almost severe in her detachment from her family, yet she was of a most affectionate and loving disposition, and she was as much beloved by her own community as she had been by the world. One of her brothers was the saintly Father Walter Clifford, who died of consumption at Palermo, in 1806. A correspondence on spiritual things was carried on between brother and sister, and very beautiful extracts from his letters were copied and much valued by the nuns. One of these must be given here, as it is very characteristic of the spiritual life of both brother and sister :

I always find devotion to our Blessed Saviour, particularly to His Sacred Heart, diametrically opposite to attachment to creatures. When I find myself tempted to love any of God's creatures more than I ought to do, I endeavour to enter in spirit into that adorable Heart, and, as it were, to kiss with affection the sweet wound which was made in it by our love, and I say, My dear Jesus, I only wish to love you, how much more lovely you are than this creature, and there seems to come forth such sweetness and unction from that sacred furnace of love, as entirely to withdraw the heart from creatures, and renders them quite insipid to it.

Readers of Brother Foley's works will remember an interesting notice of this Father Walter Clifford, and will find a long letter written by him to Mother Aloysia Austin.

She had quite an unusual dread of holding responsible offices, for which however she was eminently qualified, but her dislike for them was such that Superiors hardly liked to impose them on her, yet she did not escape altogether, for she was once first Mistress, and once Subprioress, and in the end Prioress. She was always a great favourite in the school, and looked upon by the elder girls as a saint as well as a mother. One of her chief occupations was writing. Catholic books were scarce in those days, and the nuns used to copy out numbers of lesson-books for the children. An instance of this was the old General History which was compiled in course of time by various nuns, and copies used to be made as the work went on. With some faults it has done good service, and many have expressed great admiration for it.



NORTH-WEST VIEW OF NEW HALL DURING THE HAYMAKING.

Certainly nothing better has been found to supply its place. In appearance Mother Aloysia Austin was middle-sized, slight, dark, and with fine dark eyes, and even in her old age her walk was very light and youthful.

As soon as the nuns were settled at New Hall they renewed the round of religious observance as at Liége. It was found, however, that the fatigue, privations, and anxieties they had undergone had considerably injured their health, and Reverend Mother, for a time, seriously contemplated a change in the hour for rising, and in order to make this possible, to have Matins recited overnight; but the nuns implored that the old custom of rising at four might be retained, and many of them pledged themselves to one another never to sleep longer unless obliged by obedience. They also made it a great subject of prayer, and they succeeded in their efforts, for the hour of rising has never been changed.

Unfortunately, if little is known of the choir nuns, still less is known of the lay-sisters, except that many of them were extremely good and holy. One especially, SISTER PAUL FULLWOOD, was always spoken of as a perfect saint. She had been a novice under Reverend Mother Christina Dennett, and was remarkable for her great spirit of mortification, which showed itself in her unsparingly laborious, but most cheerful spirit. She was employed in the school, and the children revered her for her great piety. She died in 1813.

SISTER CATHERINE NORRIS was another who was remembered for the great perfection with which she did all her work. To do anything in the way of sweeping or cleaning as well as old Sister Catherine was high praise.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM 1799 TO 1844.

THE nuns resumed their religious habit at Dean House at the express wish of Bishop Walmesley, but they travelled to New Hall in the costume which they had adopted at Rotterdam, and this they continued to wear for some years after they came to New Hall. It is a pity that we cannot ascertain the date at which they put on the religious habit for good and all, but it was probably about 1812. Even then the novices wore the black veil at once, and this was done that secrecy might be preserved as to the date of profession, for religious communities were only tolerated in England on condition that they should not increase and multiply. The first novice who wore the white veil was Mother Ann Xaveria Wheble; who took the habit in 1825. So great was the danger that was considered to attend religious professions, that they always took place at an early hour of the morning, and no one but the officiating priests and the community were present. The first profession at New Hall was that of Sister Mary Mechtilda Gandolfi, on July 22nd, 1799, and it passed without any special incident. When, however, her sister Dorothy, in Religion Sister Mary Clare, was to take her vows on August 16th, 1800, Father Clifton locked himself up in his room and refused to come out. He was at that time, as Mother Agatha writes of him, "not the same man as he had been," but the next day his difficulty had been removed and he performed the ceremony. Sister Mary Clare spent the day in tears, but she only said, "Ah! I knew I was unworthy." These two sisters Gandolfi became very holy Religious. They were both remarkable for their gentleness and charity and their great spirit of prayer. Reverend Mother Aloysia Clough used to call them her two doves. Mother Mary Clare died on March 26th, 1834. Mother Mechtilda was three times Subprioress. She was also Mistress of Novices, and all who were trained by her venerated her memory. Her life was a long one, and she is well remembered by several of the nuns now living. She died on October 22nd, 1850.

On the 29th of July, 1799, two lay-sisters were professed after a very long

novitiate. These were Sister Magdalen Hargitt and Sister Agnes Brown. They had crossed over to Liége in June, 1791, and had been clothed there together on May 5th, 1793, so that their professions were due before the convent broke up, but probably the turbulence of the times was the hindrance. Several professions of choir nuns took place at Holme Hall and Dean House, so that it is not easy to account for the delay which these two good souls had to suffer. Sister Magdalen did not survive her profession a year, for she died on April 5th, 1800, but Sister Agnes lived to quite modern times and was the last survivor of the Liége community. She died on February 8th, 1862, aged eighty-eight. She was of a very sweet disposition, and even in her old age her gentleness of appearance and manner never forsook her.

The first to die at New Hall was Sister Cleophoe Marshall, aged seventy-six. She died on March 14th, 1799, soon after the last stragglers of the community had arrived. She was the only one of the community who had attained the age of seventy at the time of the departure from Liége. She was an old widow, sixty years of age, when she was professed in 1783. The first choir nun to die was Sister Mary Barbara Freeman. Her real name was Dufresne, and by it she is entered in our registers. Freeman was her mother's name, and probably it was more convenient to call her by it when the nuns came to England. Her father was from Lorraine, but she was born in London. She took the habit at Liége in January, 1794, was clothed at Holme Hall on November 9th, 1795, and professed at Dean House on November 1st, 1798. She had only been professed about seven months when she died at New Hall on June 13th, 1799, aged twenty-three. On the 25th of the same month and year Sister Clare Evans died. Mother Gonzaga Poole died in 1800, and Mother Ann Xaveria Webbe and Sister Ann Teresa Clifford in 1801. Sister Ann Teresa was the youngest daughter of Hugh, fifth Lord Clifford, and Lady Ann Lee, daughter of the Earl of Lichfield. She was not only very talented and attractive and an excellent teacher, but was an exceedingly good and fervent young nun. She was a novice when the community left Liége, and all through the wanderings she showed a splendid spirit of courage and joy. She cared for nothing but her vocation. When in London the nuns accepted the hospitality of her brother Lord Clifford, some tried to persuade her to sleep on one of the few available beds, but nothing could induce her to be better lodged than her Mothers and Sisters, and she slept on a mattrass on the ground as they did.

There were no professions of choir novices from August, 1800, to the same month in 1804, when Sister M. Constantia Coleman and Sister M.

Clementina Whattolly took their vows, and on October 10th the same year, Reverend Mother and the community had the joy of admitting the daughter of their great benefactor and host at Holme Hall to her profession. The Hon. Mary Stourton was a daughter of Charles Philip, sixteenth Lord Stourton, who was the only son of Reverend Mother Christina's friend William, fifteenth Lord Stourton. Her religious name was Sister Mary Benedict. She was born at Witham, where her father and mother long resided. The latter before her marriage had been the Hon. Mary Langdale, daughter and co-heir of Marmaduke, Baron Langdale. Mother Benedict was thus sister to the Hon. Charles Langdale, whose name is so well known among Catholics.¹ She lived to a good old age, though her health was always very poor. She was very fervent, and contrived to be active and useful in a quiet way. She was always trying to help others. She died in 1850.

Among the few things chronicled in those very early days are several observances of what are called "King's fast." Extra public and private prayers are prescribed, and "penances according to each one's devotion." The first is mentioned on October 19th, 1803. In 1805, February 13th was the King's fast, and in 1806, it was on February 26th.

On December 5th, 1805, a day of rejoicing is chronicled for the victory of Trafalgar. It was celebrated by singing the *Te Deum*, and by Benediction, at which the *Exaudi* was sung. These few events are recorded in note-books kept by the chantress for future guidance. There are few things in them of general interest, for they are chiefly concerned with the music and ceremonies used on special feasts.

During all those early years there were incessant fears of a French invasion on the Essex coast. Troops were stationed at Chelmsford to be ready for any emergency. Father Clifton called on the commanding officer² for the purpose of placing New Hall and its inmates under his protection, but he demurred to undertake the responsibility without being acquainted with the place and the persons whom he was called upon to take under his care. Father Clifton accordingly invited him to visit the convent. The whole community assembled to receive him, and he conversed graciously with them. He was shown over the house and expressed himself much pleased with his reception. He afterwards told Father Clifton that he was much pleased with the appearance of the nuns, but he owned that he had never before been engaged in such a formidable encounter. One of the old nuns

¹ The Hon. Charles Stourton assumed the name of Langdale in 1815.

² Unfortunately his name has not come down to us.

in the exuberance of her gratitude, thanked him for his visit, and added, "I will pray for you;" but the officer answered in the most courteous tone, "Oh, Madam, pray do not give yourself the trouble!" On this occasion the sacristan put the greatest part of the church plate, &c., on a bed in the infirmary. She drew the curtains round the bed and darkened the room. The door was opened to admit the colonel, but he refused to enter. This was not a necessary measure, but in those days of bigotry the nuns preferred that their church ornaments should not be inspected by a Protestant visitor.

Nuns were very uncommon in England in those days, and visitors would sometimes present themselves with the hope of gratifying their curiosity by seeing them. On one such occasion Mother Mary Ann Head happened to be portress, and she got rid of their importunity by saying: "I am a nun. In seeing me you see all." She used afterwards to tell with great glee how she heard one of them remark while going away: "Well, if they are all like her, there is not much to see!" or some such words.

It has been stated that the religious habit was not worn for some years at New Hall. But there was an exception to this rule, for it was worn in the early morning for Matins. Mother Aloysia Austin Clifford suffered from an affection of the throat which disabled her, for some years, from chanting at Matins. She, however, always rose with the community, and after meditation recited her Office alone. In the summer-time she sometimes went into the grounds for this purpose. One day she wandered further than usual, and met a labourer. She quickly retraced her steps, but hearing screams, she turned and saw the poor man running away at full speed, screaming with terror. He evidently supposed he had seen a ghost. It is said that New Hall had the reputation of being haunted before the nuns came; but the only preternatural occurrence connected with the first years of the nuns' residence that can claim to be authentic, is that very frequently they used to hear great noises of grand equipages going at full speed through the great court, now the chapel. Until the changes made early in the last century this had been an open court through which carriages must frequently have passed. The noises were never heard after the Blessed Sacrament came into the chapel.

In 1806 the farm may be said to have been begun, for up to that time there was very little land except the avenue, orchard, pleasure-grounds, and garden. The first purchase of fifty-one acres was made in April, and twelve acres more were bought in September of the same year. All this land was situated at the back or north side of the house, and some of the fields then acquired formed part of the old park. Until about twenty years ago both

the nuns and the children were allowed to walk in these fields on grand occasions. The pleasure-grounds, though still unwalled, were much better protected after this purchase. In the same year a great improvement was made in the direction of better enclosure on the east side of the house. Up to this time the road to Boreham passed through our yard and orchard. Through the exertions of the same active Procuratrix, Mother Francis Xaveria Trant, who had seen to the purchase of the land, this road was turned to the other side of the pond, to the great comfort of the community. No other purchase of land was made until 1853, when twenty-nine acres were bought. After the building of the cells and some rooms in the out-quarters in 1800, no new building seems to have been attempted until Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph's time, except one small room near the breakfast-room.

It is now time to say a few words of the priests who accompanied the community to New Hall, or helped them in these early days.

On the feast of St. Joseph, March 19th, 1800, the nuns were all assembled for High Mass, which was to be sung by Father Gervais Genin. As he did not appear, someone visited his room, and found him dead in his bed with the Missal open before him. He lies buried in our little cemetery. He was a professed Father of the old Society in France, and a very holy man. He accompanied Father Clifton and the community in their migration and remained with them all through their wanderings. His place was supplied the same year by Father Peter O'Brien, who had been on the foreign mission in India at the time of the suppression of the Society. He died at New Hall on February 28th, 1807. He left behind him a reputation for great sanctity and was believed to be much favoured by God. The large walnut-tree that stands alone to the north of the house is said to have been planted by him.

Meanwhile as Father Clifton and Father O'Brien were in failing health, the services of a good French *émigré* priest were sought and obtained by Reverend Mother chiefly for the sake of securing the High Masses, which were very numerous. The name of this good priest was Rev. Stephen Chapon, from the diocese of Coutances. He was born at Percy, in Normandy. He was imprisoned in 1792, and very narrowly escaped the guillotine. One evening he received notice that his execution was to take place the next morning. A short account of his life, written some years after his death by one of the nuns who had known him, mentions that his life was saved by the downfall of Robespierre, but on his tombstone in our cemetery the year 1792 is given as the date of his escape. He certainly did escape early in the

morning of the day that was to have been his last, and when he came to New Hall in 1803 his hair was as white as snow, and he said it changed from black to white in the course of that terrible night. He was of a singularly pious and simple mind. Many stories are told of this good priest, one of which is that while still in France God showed him the house in England where he was to find a safe home, and that when he came to New Hall he found his way about the place at once without guidance. The nuns did not then wear their religious dress, but when they did begin to wear it he was astonished and said it was the habit he had seen in his dream or vision. The story goes on to say that he saw all the nuns martyred in front of the house, but a dream of this kind would have been a natural result of his revolutionary experiences. The fulfilment of this prophecy has figured in many a community joke, song or verse, as it has been half believed in by many. Rev. Monsieur Chapon was chaplain here for twenty-three years, during which time he sang nearly all the High Masses. He was very much respected for his goodness and amiability to every one. Though he was a great acquisition and assisted the nuns very much, yet he always considered himself to be indebted to the community for the peaceful shelter they had given him. Some years before his death he wrote an epitaph for himself, but this was found to be so flattering to the nuns that part of it was left out, and even in the inscription actually on the stone, instead of hospitable "community," the word "country" is introduced. He died on June 27th, 1826. He was very venerable-looking, tall and bent, and his hair extraordinarily white. The nuns used to say of him that he forgot his French and never learned English.

Meanwhile Father Clifton was becoming less and less capable of acting as confessor of the nuns and children, and in 1810 or 1812 he went to London, where he died on May 23rd, 1812.

We learn from Dr. Oliver's *Collectanea* and Brother Foley's *Records*, that the true name of this Father was Fanning, and that he was born in London, of Irish parentage. It is only when examining the details of the migration from Liège, and the final settlement at New Hall, that we have been able to realize the great anxieties and fatigues which he underwent, for a large share in the responsibility for each fresh decision rested with him. The community was probably much the largest of those which came to England at about the same time, and when London was at length reached, the whole party, including children and servants, numbered seventy, though many of the children had been removed to their homes in the course of the journey. Even after his

severe illness at Holme Hall, he visited a great many places which had been offered to the nuns. He continued to be ordinary confessor to the nuns until 1809, but they were always allowed to have recourse to Father O'Brien, and afterwards to Father Kemper. We do not know the exact date of his removal to London, but it was considered to be a very sad necessity by Reverend Mother and the community, who owed him so deep a debt of gratitude.

Father Herman Kemper came to New Hall in 1808, from the mission at Wigan. The reader will remember his name in connection with Reverend Mother Christina Dennett. It has been stated that he gave an order of obedience to Mother Mary Joseph Smith to write her life, but in the MS. itself, it is said that the life was written eleven years after Mother Christina's death, and it is certain that Father Kemper was not officially connected with the community at that time, which was 1792, but perhaps he recommended Reverend Mother Aloysia Clough to give her the order. He was always considered to be an exceptionally holy and spiritual man and an excellent director. Some of his spiritual writings are preserved.

Father Thomas Reeve came to New Hall on April 8th, 1812, the feast of the Holy Sepulchre and Low Sunday—"and a very low Sunday it was for me," he used to say in after-years, but he quite outlived this repugnance and became a devoted friend of the house. He had charge of the mission, and was confessor to the children and gave them religious instructions, at least from the time when Father Forrester became infirm. He was also confessor to some of the nuns, and was much esteemed by them. In August, 1826, he was called to London by his Superiors for medical advice, his health being in a very bad state, and he died there rather suddenly on September 7th, 1826, aged seventy-four.

Father Charles Forrester was French, and his true name was Fleury. He entered the Society in his own country in 1756, but joined the English Province on the expulsion of the Jesuits from France in 1764. He re-entered the restored English Province, and made his vows at Wardour Castle together with Father Corbe in 1807. In 1810 he accompanied the Dowager Lady Arundell to Irnham, Lincolnshire, and remained there till her death in June, 1813. This is the probable date of his coming to New Hall. He was certainly here in November, 1813, for his signature then occurs in the examination register. He was then seventy-four years of age, and was soon glad to give up the charge of the school to Father Reeve, but he was director of the house and confessor to most of the nuns almost to the last. He was most deeply

venerated by them as a most saintly man. He was a great sufferer, and was almost confined to his room for several years before his death, but an adjoining room was fitted up as a chapel, and here he had the consolation of saying Mass daily, and heard confessions. When in 1822 he became nearly blind, and too infirm to say Mass, Father Reeve said it daily for him in the same temporary chapel. One of the community daily made his spiritual reading for him, and recited the long prayers for a happy death to be found in the *Libellus precum* which he had been accustomed to say for himself for many years. Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph, then a young nun, frequently rendered him this little service. To the end of her life she always spoke of him as a most exceptionally holy man and a very able director, and she always kept his *Libellus precum* as a sort of relic. In the fly-leaf of this book she wrote some of the details here written. Father Forrester died at the age of eighty-six on May 2nd, 1825.

It will be remembered that Reverend Mother Aloysia Clough died, beloved and lamented by all, in 1816. The Vicar Apostolic of the district, the Right Rev. Dr. Poynter, was not able to be present at the Chapter for the election of her successor, but he appointed Father Forrester to preside in his name. Mother Mary Regis Gerard was elected ninth Prioress on July 16th of the same year. She was first Mistress of the school at the time, and the choice of her as Prioress astonished no one, for she was singularly well-fitted for any responsible office, and friends of the community who knew her have gone so far as to say that she was fit to govern a kingdom. Her distinguishing virtue is said to have been her large-hearted generosity. She showed this from the first moment of her religious life in the perfect surrender of herself to God. She never seemed to think of herself at all. As Superior she showed the same spirit, as if she was only exalted above others for the sake of helping them as much as possible. She was only hard upon herself. Some little account has already been given her, and the march of events must now be taken up.

The first ceremony that took place after her election was the clothing of Lady Frances Browne, in religion Sister Aloysia Sales. She was at school at New Hall from May, 1807, to August, 1811, and she was a very clever and accomplished girl. After spending four years at home, she entered the Noviceship, and was clothed on August 5th, 1816. In the following spring her health began to fail, and it was thought that a change was necessary for her. She went to Brighton, intending to return as soon as possible, but she died in a week, on May 16th, 1817.

Sister Aloysia Gonzaga O'Connor was professed in 1818. A short account must be given of the miracle of which she was the subject, as it became public and was much commented on at the time it occurred. This very able young nun was still in the Noviceship, when on November 20th, 1820, she was seized with violent pain in her right arm. By November 30th she had lost all use of her arm, which began to swell very much and caused excruciating pain. The smell from the hand and arm soon became so fetid and unwholesome, that even in the depth of winter, Mr. Carpue, the consulting surgeon, ordered the windows of the infirmary to be open day and night. Her ring was taken off at once. The arm swelled to an enormous size, the wrist was fifteen inches round, the enlarged hand hung powerless by her side, and the fingers were spread out. Her own account of the cure tells us that the flesh was the colour of tallow that has been kept a long time. She had been treated by Dr. Badely, of Chelmsford, and Mr. Barlow, of Writtle, and several eminent doctors had been consulted, and amongst others, Abernethy, with the result that the only possible remedy was said to be amputation. Just at that time Prince Hohenlohe was working miraculous cures by devotions to the Holy Name, and chiefly by novenas of Masses in its honour. A friend of Reverend Mother Regis, who was travelling in Germany, having heard of the case, begged Prince Hohenlohe to make a novena of Masses for the invalid, which he agreed to do, and the novena was to end on May 3rd, 1822. He requested that the community should make a novena in honour of the Holy Name at the same time, and that all should communicate at the eight o'clock Mass, and at that hour he was to say the ninth Mass. Thus the Masses were obtained without the knowledge of Reverend Mother and the community, but they made the novena as was requested. Towards the end of Mass on May 3rd, Sister Mary Gonzaga, finding no relief, said: "Thy will be done, O Lord! Thou hast not thought me worthy of this cure." Almost immediately after, at the words, *Verbum caro factum est*, at the last Gospel, she felt a thrilling sensation in her right shoulder, arm, and hand. The pain instantly ceased, the arm and hand were instantly restored to use and motion, so that she was able to make the sign of the Cross, hold her Office-book, and stretch out her arms in the form of a cross without difficulty. The size of her wrist diminished by five inches before night, and her fingers were so reduced that she was able to put on her ring, but though the swelling began at once to subside almost visibly, it was five days before it entirely disappeared, though she felt no more inconvenience from it. Dr. Badely, the convent physician at Chelmsford, and Mr. Barlow,

surgeon at Writtle, both of whom had attended the case from the beginning and were Protestants, expressed their astonishment, and in a letter dated 24th of May, Dr. Badely wrote: "This baffles all reasoning. What can we say? Nothing; but bow in silent wonder and admiration, or burst out with the poet: 'These are thy wondrous works, Parent of good—Almighty!'" This miracle became public, and Prince Hohenlohe was insulted in the *Edinburgh Review*. Dr. Milner examined into the case, and the reader must be referred to his Life for details of the controversy that took place on the subject. Sister Mary Gonzaga's arm and hand remained perfectly well until her death, which took place on May 22nd, 1837, fifteen years after the cure, and in the forty-fifth year of her age.

The only incident in the above narrative that we cannot vouch for is the presence of Dr. Abernethy, but neither can we contradict it, for certainly some eminent physician besides Dr. Carpue was consulted, but his name is not mentioned in our accounts. Dr. Abernethy's name occurs in an account of the miracle recently published in an American periodical, which states that "Dr. Abernethy makes mention of the cure in his works, but after the manner of his class fails to attach any supernatural significance to it." This we are unable to verify.

When the novena was first proposed, Father Forrester told Sister Mary Gonzaga that she would be cured not suddenly but gradually, which was the case at least as to the disappearance of the swelling, for the pain ceased at once. After this incident became public, a great deal of annoyance was experienced by the community from the number of visitors who wished to see the subject of the miracle.

Soon after this, Margaret Rorke, another young Irish lady who had been at school at New Hall and very much wished to enter the Noviceship, fell into a decline, and was considered to be very near death. She was a younger sister of Mother Francis Xaveria Rorke, who was professed in 1822. A novena of Masses was made by Prince Hohenlohe, and at the end of it Margaret recovered her health, apparently so completely as to enable her to carry out her desire for a religious life. Sufficient time was allowed to verify the reality of her cure, and in 1824 she arrived at New Hall, and went through the greatest part of her noviceship with great fervour. She was clothed with Mother Mary Stanislaus Hubbard, on August 5th, 1825, and was not far from the time of her profession when the disease showed itself again. Her love for her vocation was so ardent that she was allowed to make her vows, and the general belief was that she had obtained her cure for this special

purpose. She had some property of her own, and left to the community what would have been her "portion." Attempts were made by the nuns to dissuade her from it, but she had a strong will and insisted on thus proving her affection for the convent of her choice.

Her sister, Mother Francis Xaveria Rorke, was already professed at the time of her sister's cure. She also had been at school at New Hall, and the seriousness and even solemnity of her countenance and manner had obtained for her the nick-name of "the monk," but she was so really good that she was always liked and respected. In after-years she was first Mistress, and noted for her strictness, but was so just, and also so kind when sickness or trouble called out her more amiable qualities, that she was very generally remembered with great affection by former pupils. She was several times Procuratrix and Mistress of lay-sisters, and she was always much revered by the nuns, but she never lost a certain severity of expression. Margaret, on the contrary, was gay and merry.

Sister Teresa Stanislaus Wickwar had only been professed six months when she went for her reward, on February 13th, 1822. A very promising member, lived only eight years after her profession, which took place on August 27th, 1825: this was Mother Euphrasia Clement. A nun still living remembers how much she was liked and admired in the school.

On September 13th, 1824, Reverend Mother Regis obtained a renewal of the much-prized grant made in 1771 by the Venerable Father General Laurence Ricci to Reverend Mother Christina Dennett. A petition was presented to the Very Rev. Father Aloysius Fortis, first General of the restored Society, and this was seconded by the kind exertions of Father Thomas Glover, and other friends. The new deed of affiliation, with the more ancient one, is hung up in our community-room. It was written and embellished by the novices of the Society, at that date living with Father Fortis. The following translation of it was made by Father Thomas Reeve, S.J.:

Aloysius Fortis, General of the Society of Jesus, to the most Reverend and beloved in Christ Mary Regis Gerard, Prioress of the Convent of Religious women called Sepulchrines, at New Hall, situated in the county of Essex in England, and to all the nuns, now and hereafter living in the same monastery, Eternal Salvation in Our Lord:

Whereas, Revd. Ladies, the great virtue and singular benevolence of the nuns of your Order and Convent, formerly situated in the suburbs of Liége, was so highly prized by my Predecessor, Rev. Father Laurence Ricci, General of the Society of Jesus, as appears manifest from this particular, that his Reverence

greatly esteeming their virtues, and desiring to requite their benefactions with spiritual favours, admitted this your community to a participation in the merits of all our Society, as is evident from the diploma bearing date 13 May, 1771, which you have presented to me; though the Community of your order, through the pressing misfortunes of the times, having left Liège, is settled at New Hall in Essex in England, and all the ancient Sisters are dead, still, being assured that the same fervour of spirit and bright virtues, and benevolence towards our Society, drawn from a certain succession and imitation of the former Religious, neither abated by the lapse or various vicissitudes of years, shines forth in you, most Revd. Ladies, I also wish not to be less indulgent than my Predecessor, and will not refuse to grant you so well founded a petition, the more so as you ardently desire to obtain it from me.

Wherefore, as I am not able duly to acknowledge your virtuous dispositions, so favourable to our Society by any other retribution than what is spiritual, similar to the former, in virtue of that authority which the Lord formerly granted to my Revd. Predecessor, and at present to us in this little Society, I do hereby make you, Reverend Mother, and all and each of the Religious Sisters succeeding you hereafter, in the said convent of New Hall, partakers in all and every one of the Sacrifices, Prayers, Fasts, and other good works and pious exercises, whether of body or soul, which by the grace of God, are performed in the Society, and we impart to you, with all the affection of our heart in Jesus Christ, a full communication of the same, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Moreover, we beseech the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that He would be pleased mercifully to confirm and ratify this concession in Heaven, and supplying for our poverty by the inexhaustible merits of His Son, heap on you, Revd. Ladies, now and henceforth every grace and blessing in this life, and vouchsafe to reward you with the crown of Eternal Glory hereafter.

Given at Rome, the 13th of the Kalends of May, 1824.

ALOYSIUS FORTIS.

Thus the diploma was signed on April 19th, but was not received here till September 13th, 1824.

The joy and gratitude with which this document was received by the community may readily be conceived, as the expedience of obtaining a renewal of the affiliation by Father Laurence Ricci had long been felt. When Father Roothaan visited the convent in 1849, the nuns asked him for another similar document, but he answered that it would add nothing to that granted by Father Fortis, as no suppression and resuscitation had occurred since then.

With the exception of the death of some of the old Liège nuns and lay-sisters, of whom something has already been said, and the clothings and professions of new members, nothing of interest seems to have occurred

for many years. This, therefore, seems to be a suitable place to introduce a sketch of the life of Mother Magdalen Sales Poole, the greatest part of which was written soon after her death by a nun still living. Mother Magdalen Sales was professed in 1828. It is too precious to be cut short, as we possess few such accounts of our nuns.

BARBARA POOLE was born in Buckinghamshire on Christmas Day, 1802. Her father and mother were Protestants, but were worthy, respectable persons, remarkable for their charity to the poor and in particular to the French emigrants, and among the latter were some nuns to whom they showed very great kindness and generosity, and whom they assisted to return to their own country. Mr. John Poole, Barbara's father, was steward to the Duke of Buckingham, who esteemed and favoured him much for his high principles and talents for business; he was also a very highly educated man. The Duke lent his house at Stowe to the French exiled royal family, and it was here that Barbara lived with her father. She used to relate in after-years how Louis XVIII. used to play with her when she was a tiny child. Mr. Poole asked the Duchess of Angoulême to be godmother to his little girl, but she refused unless the child were baptized a Catholic. Mr. Poole consented, and later on, through the influence of the Duchess of Buckingham, who underwent so much for her religion after she became a Catholic, little Barbara was sent to the Abbé Carron's school at Somerstown. The child was delighted to go there, for by playing in her own home, with the children of a French *émigré* family, she had begun to love not only them, but the religion they professed. Her mother was not pleased at the step, but her father, who had more liberal ideas, said the little girl would imbibe no harm, he was sure, in a Catholic school. The child returned home a fervent little Catholic, and often had to suffer on account of her adherence to her religious duties, but not from her father. It was again through the Duchess of Buckingham's influence that Mrs. Poole's prejudices were overcome, and that she took her daughter to school at New Hall, where she was much charmed with the reception she met with. Barbara came to school on November 20th, 1813, and remained three years, until she was fourteen years of age. At about this time her mother died a Protestant, to the young girl's great affliction. She was then sent to the English Convent of Poor Clares at Gravelines. On her return home after an absence of three years, she had much to suffer from a Protestant aunt and other members of her family, but her father, who loved her tenderly, always took her part. She found great difficulty in getting to the Sacraments, and often rode fifteen miles without her breakfast to get to Mass and Holy Communion, and sometimes then found no priest. On the 31st January, 1826, she came to New Hall to become a nun, against the wishes of her father and two brothers, who loved her tenderly on account of her amiable and affectionate disposition as well as for her many uncommon mental endowments. She received the first habit on February 13th, 1826, was clothed on January 23rd, 1827, and professed on January 29th, 1828. Her talents



THE CHAPEL.

caused her to be employed in the school, where she won the hearts of her pupils by her cheerful, amiable piety, and drew them to virtue by her example and discreet admonitions. The same good qualities caused her to be much beloved likewise in the community, whom she edified by her fervour in the observance of the Rules as well as by her generosity and courage in the practice of humility and self-abnegation. Indeed, her severity to herself was in some things indiscreet. For more than a year she took no breakfast at all, while teaching several hours in the school and scarcely ever being dispensed from rising at four for Matins. Meanwhile she suffered for years from what proved to be a spinal complaint. She was chosen Procuratrix in 1833, and her labours and exertions in that office, added to her austerities, hastened the progress of the disease, which had been forming unknown to herself, and which, before it prostrated her, caused her intense sufferings, notwithstanding which she went on with her duties as if she ailed nothing. On the feast of St. Bridget, 1834, after some days of unusual exertion, she was so ill that she had to take to her bed, which from that day till the period of her death she never left for a day. During the twenty-three years that she passed on her couch she was never without suffering of body or mind. At times the pains in her back and head were intense; she soon lost the sight of her left eye, then her legs became paralyzed, but with her one eye, and the almost miraculous strength that God left her in her arms, she was enabled to employ herself in the intervals which her severe pains gave her in working for the Church and the Community in translating and compiling the lives of the Saints, especially those of the Society of Jesus, which she venerated and loved with most intense affection. When on November 6th, 1849, the very Rev. Father General Roothaan honoured the convent with a visit, he was taken to see Sister Magdalen Sales. He took her head between his hands, blessed her, and told her that God had given her two great graces, one that of being in continual suffering, the other, more rare, of being continually employed. He afterwards said that he had held in his hands the head of a saint.

She was the comfort and prop, we may almost say the guide of our Community. Never during her long course of trial does any one remember to have heard her complain of her pains, of her food, her drink, of neglect, or of the faults of those who had the care of her. Early in her illness, through some strange oversight, or rather by the loving permission of her Divine Spouse Who had chosen her to have a large share in His sufferings, a person who had recently arrived as a postulant was appointed to take charge of her. This person eluded the vigilance of the infirmarian, and not only neglected her duty to the poor invalid, but even herself ate everything she fancied that was sent to her. When the state of the case came to be suspected, it was only obedience that opened the patient's lips, and never was she heard to mention the subject again. For the last twelve years of her life she was under the care of a good little lay-sister named Sister Anselm Bleasdale, who venerated her as a saint, and after her death, at the request of one of the nuns, wrote down some account of her virtues. In this paper she says: "Her obedience I think was very extraordinary, for whatever she was told,

whether by her superiors or persons very much beneath her in every sense of the word, she did the thing without reply or any show of repugnance. The person who had the care of her had to insist on her asking her for help, or she would go on for days in extreme sufferings for fear of giving trouble. I know her to have been in dreadful sufferings from wounds in different parts of her body, but she would not speak of them. At least seven hours of the day and the greater part of the night she gave to prayer; not that she said so, but the person who had the care of her heard and saw all this for herself."

She sympathized in the mental and bodily sufferings and joys of all and each of the community, having a wonderful gift of consoling the afflicted. She often administered comfort when she was comfortless herself and nearly exhausted from bodily pain. The sufferings of others were ever more to her than her own, and she would have taken them all for her share if God would have permitted it. On one occasion she would have offered her life for the preservation of that of a good Jesuit if obedience had not prevented her. Her charity and forbearance with others were wonderful. She seemed never to have even a first motion of resentment for any unkindness, nor were the faults of others ever a subject of uneasiness to her but for the offence to God. To have tried her in any way was cause sufficient to experience double kindness from her. Conformity to the Divine Will seemed the great study of her life, and in every circumstance, in every trial and suffering her ejaculation was: "Blessed be the sweet Will of God!" Three years before her death she became nearly quite blind, and her resignation under this heavy cross was perfect. Many little circumstances which were noticed by us, and particularly her more continual prayer, her tranquillity of mind, and the stripping herself of every little convenience that she had about her made us think that she had a presentiment at least, of her long looked-for departure to her true home, but we would not, could not believe she was to be taken from us. She was seized with her last illness on the 6th December, 1856. On the 8th the doctor pronounced her case hopeless, and she asked to receive the last Sacraments. To one of the nuns who visited her shortly after the news of her state so joyful to her, so afflicting to them, had been made known, she said cheerfully with an angelic smile, "*Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi, in domum Domini ibimus.*" She received Extreme Unction with great devotion, so that it seemed the preparation not for death, but for the happy meeting with her Spouse, and her lamp was burning brightly, therefore with reason was it so. As she vomited nearly every ten minutes up to a short time before her death, she was unable to receive the Holy Viaticum. Some one suggested to her that the Will of God would be her Viaticum: "Yes!" she replied, with intense affection, "the Will of God is my all." She seemed continually employed in prayer, and often expressed her longing for the hour of her departure. "*Veni Domine et noli tardare,*" she was heard to say. She asked one of the nuns to read to her Faber's hymn, "Oh Paradise!" during which she often smiled and pressed her hand. On Thursday, the last morning of her life, she seemed as if she could not contain her transports, but was continually thanking God for all his mercies. She joined in and answered the

prayers of the agonizing, and happily passed away to the bosom of her God at about 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ in the morning, on December 11th, 1856, being the octave day of St. Barbara.

A few years after Mother Magdalen Sales' profession a convert lady of some notoriety was introduced to the community by Constantia Countess Clifford, sister to Reverend Mother Aloysia Austin. This was Miss Agnew, the author of *Geraldine, a Tale of Conscience*, a book that was very much liked half a century ago, and the fourteenth edition of which is now published. The character of the heroine is her own, but the only incidents of her own life that we can verify in it are those which happened here. She gives a very good description of the house, but makes the avenue two miles long instead of one. A few of the nuns are very well hit off in a few words. If she had not given the name of Sister Gertrude, no one who had seen her could fail to recognize Mother Gertrude Newsham in the "tall, pale, graceful portress, the very beau ideal of a faded nun who with smiling courtesy welcomed the strangers." She speaks also of the dignity, sweetness and humility of the Reverend Mother, and the great confidence she inspired. All that we have heard from the old nuns of Reverend Mother Regis justifies these words. As to Sister Martha, the "uncouth lay-sister," the children used to pick up sticks for her fires thirty years after Angela de Grey was at school. Angela de Grey is a fictitious character, but probably the incidents of Mother Aloysia Austin's early life, as well as her manner and appearance, as they might have been when she was young are described, for Mother A. Austin was an old woman in 1835. Father Bridge is probably the person introduced as Father Lawrence. The "new" and "old" parlour still keep their names, and the clock, "the most romantic clock she had ever heard," still continues "its stroke at every seven minutes and a half, and its busy summing up of quarters and half hours." Miss Agnew, like Geraldine, considered that she had missed her vocation in not having entered an Order that ministered to the poor. She left after a few months and founded the religious community of the "Sisters of Mary," which did a great deal of good.

We possess a letter written from New Hall by Miss Agnew in April, 1835, before she had made up her mind to enter the Novitiate. In it we find evidence of the great interest taken in the cure of Sister Mary Gonzaga. Miss Agnew writes:

You will be pleased that I have at length made acquaintance with Sister Gonzaga. She paid me a visit in the parlour and interested me extremely, at

first by her beauty and her gentleness; and afterwards when we became more acquainted, by her Irish cheerfulness and frankness of disposition. I looked at the miraculous hand, and perceived just as you described them to me, the little white lines where the skin was cut. I love to think that I am dwelling in the abode where God has vouchsafed the exhibition of his power and of his tender care, and feel as though I were on holy ground. . . . Yesterday the distribution of blessed Palms was a pretty sight in this Chapel, where everything is conducted with such regularity. You must try to think of me at half past four on Thursday, because I am then to sing the first lamentation of Jeremiah by Reverend Mother's request. I am becoming a little less awe struck now when in the Quire, but really when I first was among all these black heads waving and bowing about in every direction, my heart died within me, and I could scarcely utter a note!

This is certainly an amusing account of the choir ceremonies. Even in this letter she shows her talent for sketching characters in a few words. She writes of one who was then a young professed: "I have become well acquainted with Miss Loughnan, who has taken the humble name of Mary Magdalene. She is all frankness and warmth, and as you described her to be, perfectly happy." Of Mother Mary Aloysia she writes: "Miss Weld is at present the only novice and ought to be a great pet. She is a young, merry creature and full of zeal." She continues: "My principal friend here is Miss Clifford (Mother Aloysia Austin). She gives me several lectures about my being in such an over zealous hurry about everything, and speaking my mind on all occasions: a habit which I fear time will have hard labour to cure."

We must now return to the succession of priests who were here. Father Bridge, S.J., was confessor of the nuns and children from 1822 to 1835. He was a very saintly man and was highly venerated both by the nuns and children. Many of these corresponded with him in after-life, and several who were nuns here treasured to the end of their lives letters which he had written to them on the subject of their vocation while they were in their own homes after leaving school. After his removal from New Hall he was appointed Spiritual Father at Stonyhurst, but Lord Stourton obtained him for chaplain, and he remained at Stourton till his death.

Father Angier, S.J., had been a novice in the old Society, and after its suppression had been ordained at Liège in 1780 and spent many years on the English Mission. He rejoined the Society in 1803, but did not take his final vows until after he had been appointed chaplain at New Hall in 1827, when he made them in our chapel. He was about seventy-two years of age when he was sent to sing the High Masses here, and when he said that he had

never sung Mass in his life, the Provincial told him he must learn. The saintly old man gave the greatest edification by regularly taking lessons from Mother Joseph Sales Dignan, then the chief musician of the convent. He sang very well. He died on January 18th, 1837, aged eighty-three, and is buried in our cemetery.

Father Joseph Tristram, S.J., or Cross, who had been Rector at Stonyhurst, succeeded Father Bridge as confessor of the nuns and children. He was brother to Mother Borgia and Mother Xaveria Tristram or Cross. He was very infirm, and died on April 14th, 1843.

Father Beeston, S.J., came in 1842, but left the following year. His sermons were spoken of by the nuns with the greatest admiration. He was very versatile in his talents, and among other things he wrote very good verse with great facility. A very devotional hymn for private use which he wrote for the spiritual consolation of one of the nuns has been preserved. Father Holden, S.J., came after Father Tristram's death in 1843 and remained till 1847.

It must not be left unmentioned that during Reverend Mother Regis' time a great increase of temporal means came to the community. Had it not been for the great prosperity of the school, the nuns would have been destitute after the great expenses they had incurred on their travels, but large sums of money came to Reverend Mother Regis from her family, and among the rest a handsome legacy. With what she could lay by from these she resolved to turn the house into a suitable monastic building. She even obtained a plan which could not be carried out without much building. She was averse to doing anything by halves, and intended that the convent should be completed without interruption when once begun; but her design received its death-blow with the failure of Wright's bank, at which time the losses of the convent were very great, though Reverend Mother Regis did not show the slightest concern even for a moment. She merely considered that God had shown her it was not His will that her plan should be carried out, and said she was content to leave things as she found them. She was then beginning to be very infirm, and desired to lay down her burthen as so many of her predecessors had done, and retire into a life of recollection and prayer, but the nuns would not hear of it, and she continued in her arduous office until her death. She kept her whole jubilee of religious life in 1840 and her half jubilee as Prioress in 1843. She died on June 13th, 1843. It would be impossible for a Superior to be more beloved than she was. The nuns who

never knew her can only regret that those who loved and venerated her so deeply wrote no memoir of her while the memory of her virtues was still fresh.

The Right Rev. Dr. Griffiths, Vicar Apostolic, presided at the Chapter for the election of her successor, and the choice made may well have astonished him, for Reverend Mother Aloysia Austin was a little older than her predecessor, and if she had always disliked responsibility, her repugnance must have been much greater now that she had attained the age of seventy-three and had been professed fifty years. She had however great qualities of mind and heart, and was very holy and firm of purpose. She was exceedingly beloved by the nuns, and this was probably the true motive of their choice. She had a great devotion to St. Thomas Aquinas, and prayed much to him to avert the election, which she had some reason to dread. When it had taken place she turned the Saint's picture to the wall. When looking over her predecessor's papers she used to sigh and say—to think that all this will have to be done over again in six months! In fact she only survived her election for less than seven months. The nuns used to say that she killed herself, for she insisted on keeping all the fasting and abstinence both of the Church and the Rule, which her Superiors had prevented her from doing for many years. Thus she weakened herself, and succumbed to a short attack of influenza on January 14th, 1844. She is said to have done a great deal of good during her time of short superiority.

CHAPTER X.

REVEREND MOTHER TERESA JOSEPH AND REVEREND MOTHER
MARY ALPHONSA.

ON January 23rd, 1844, the tenth day after the death of Reverend Mother Aloysia Austin Clifford, the Right Rev. Dr. Griffiths came to New Hall and presided at the Chapter for the election of a new Prioress. The choice of the Chapter fell on Mother Teresa Joseph Blount, who up to that time had led a very retired life, and had never filled any office in the community, but had been chiefly occupied in teaching in the school. She was then fifty-three years of age, and had been professed nearly thirty-five years. She was born at Hereford, and was daughter of Dr. William Blount and Mary Lambe, and her baptismal name was Anna Maria. She and her sister Emma were sent to school at New Hall, possibly because Reverend Mother Aloysia Clough was a relative of theirs, and they were also related to the Beringtons, three of whom were professed at Liège. They arrived on April 18th, 1804. Just before their departure from home, their uncle, Mr. Lambe, wrote to remonstrate with their father for "sending those two poor girls to school in Essex where the French were sure to land." Anna Maria was then thirteen years of age and had made her first Communion. She only left the convent once after her first entrance, and then for only about three months. In her whole life she never saw the sea. She was thought very highly of by all the Mistresses for her talents, and much more for her perfect uprightness and very earnest piety. Her vocation was very marked, and with the consent of her father she entered the Noviceship at the age of sixteen, still wearing the school uniform. She took the habit on September 8th, 1807, was clothed on September 14th, 1808, and professed on September 15th, 1809. She went through her noviceship with a fervour which never left her. She was at once sent to teach in the school, and from the first the children noticed that she always seemed to be in the presence of God, and no one doubted the truth of their

observation. Nothing seemed to distract her, and while superintending the Kingstide plays the girls were sometimes amused to see her beating the drum for some stage march with one hand, and using her rosary with the other, with all the appearance of a person absorbed in prayer. She was an exceedingly energetic and excellent teacher, and spent about thirty years of her life as Mistress, first of the second class, and then of the first. She was made Mistress of Studies in about 1824, and did not relinquish this office till many years after she became Superior. It will be remembered that Reverend Mother Regis Gerard contemplated very extensive improvements, which the failure of Wright's bank took from her the means of carrying out. By the time that it became possible to undertake any building she had become too infirm to see to it, but Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph at once, on becoming Superior, determined to do what she could, though she was quite unprovided with means to realize the original design. Her first effort was to enclose the little garden under the cells with a wall. This was a very great comfort to the nuns. At about the same time a covered way was made between the house and the out-quarters, and a dining-room was made for the priests in the place where an old stable had stood. Part of the same stable was utilized in favour of a cherished plan of Reverend Mother's, viz., the formation of a school for the children of the neighbourhood. The opening of this little school raised a good deal of "No Popery" feeling in the villages round New Hall, and the clergyman at Springfield, as well as the nearest "Squire," visited the convent and tried to intimidate Reverend Mother into closing the school. The interviews were stormy, but she seemed rather to enjoy them, and was very far from being intimidated. Mother Constantia Coleman was appointed the first Mistress, with Mother Ann Joseph Gillow for her assistant. Both Protestants and Catholics came to it, and no secret was made that they all learned the Catholic catechism, and all said the same prayers, but ill-will gradually subsided when it was understood that the little Protestants were not forced or even urged to become "Papists." Nevertheless a good number of Catholic families are indebted to this school for their knowledge of our holy religion. The little grain of mustard-seed has never become a large tree, as the school has never numbered more than thirty, and since so many other schools have flourished in the neighbourhood it has dwindled down, and at present numbers only eight. Another design that the new Prioress had very much at heart was the building of an enclosure wall round the grounds. This was begun in

1845 and was soon completed. Up to that time the grounds had no better protection than hedges and fences, and on one occasion a stray bull found its way in and pursued Mother Ann Joseph Gillow, who, fortunately, was near the garden door which was unlocked. Reverend Mother next turned her thoughts to the needs of the little congregation for whom no suitable accommodation had as yet been provided in the chapel. The former school refectory, which was under the nuns' choir, and an original portion of the great hall, was now opened into the chapel for their benefit. A school refectory was built on the site intended for the future church, and the foundations were laid with sufficient depth and strength to support a church at some future date.

In 1849 a cottage was built for the bailiff at the lower end of the Park meadow.

One very important change came about at the very time that Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph was elected. This was the carrying of the Eastern Counties' Railway line through the avenue. The first luggage train passed this way in January, 1844, and the first passenger train began to run in June the same year. The nuns were blamed for not claiming larger compensation than the £300 which they actually received, especially as no convenience was arranged for, like a bridge or a station near the avenue. It is clear, however, from the dates given above, that Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph was not responsible for the arrangements made, for all must have been decided before her election.

Very soon after Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph was made Prioress she purchased the great church bell with some donation of money made by members of Reverend Mother Regis' family, and there was a grand ceremony of the baptism of the bell, which was performed in the Pink Room, and the bell was christened "Elizabeth" in honour of Reverend Mother Regis. Her grand-niece, Blanche Arundell, afterwards Mrs. Smyth-Pigott, then a little girl at school, was godmother on the occasion. Perhaps it was the absence of a bell that must bear the blame of a strange omission in the children's devotions, the omission, namely, of saying the *Angelus*. It was introduced, and Reverend Mother at the same time thought well to shorten the night prayers by omitting certain "Hail Marys," one of which was said against "fire," and another against thieves. A few days after this a fire broke out in the old blue room chimney on one Sunday morning during Prime. One of the nuns whispered the disaster to Reverend Mother, who left the choir, sent for

the men who had come for Mass, and helped them to put out the fire. While carrying buckets of water with the greatest activity she was observed to be absorbed in recollection and prayer, and the fire was put out in time to enable her to get to Communion. Almost immediately after another fire broke out at the other side of the house, and then the Hail Marys were resumed.

In about 1848 the relics of St. Flaviana were given to the community by a Miss Young, afterwards Mrs. Scholfield. She was one of several sisters, converts from the Isle of Wight. This Miss Young stayed as a visitor for several months in the out-quarters. Afterwards, when in Rome, she obtained the body of the young Saint from the catacombs as the most acceptable present she could make to the community. The body was left in the case in which it came until Bishop Wiseman made his first visitation, when at his suggestion it was taken to the infirmary, where Mother Magdalen Sales had been lying for many years. The case was opened, and the relics were put in their present case there, but no miracle happened. The children, however, used to say that St. Flaviana got them all their intentions.

Between the death of Father Angier in 1837, and the arrival of Father Francis Brownbill in 1843, several priests came in succession to sing the High Masses. One of these was Don Lopez, a Carlist refugee. He was here for a time with Father Tristram, S.J., for whom he had a very great regard. The life was, however, too quiet for him, and he left to work in the mission at Yarmouth. Father Brziniski was a Polish refugee, a Franciscan. He was on his way to Siberia with other political prisoners, but escaped and came to England. He left New Hall to enter a monastery of his Order in Austrian Poland. He recognized the surplice and double red cross as soon as he saw them, as the marks of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. He did not know of any nuns of the Order in Poland, but said that the Canons were very numerous until 1825, when they were among the first Religious Orders to be suppressed by the Czar Nicholas. Father Holden was confessor of the nuns from the time of Father Tristram's death, on April 14th, 1843, until 1846. When he was removed by his Superiors, his place was taken by Father Robert Johnson, a brother of Father William Johnson, the last of our Jesuit directors. Father Robert had been Pro-Rector at St. Francis Xavier's College, Calcutta, where he had endured a great deal of suffering, which ended in the departure of the Fathers at the desire of the Bishop. The nuns thought very highly of him, and he was much interested

in all here, but he was soon called away to a very noble work, viz., to the Wigan mission, when a very bad form of typhus was raging there, which had already carried off some of the priests. He said with great cheerfulness when he was leaving: "Good-bye! I am going into the ranks of death," and so he was, for he caught the fever and died very soon after. When down with the fever he wished to have Father William Johnson to prepare him for death, and the latter spoke in after-years with great consolation of having been called upon to do his brother this service.

After him came Father Francis Lythgoe, on the eve of Trinity Sunday, 1847. He at once made his mark, both in the convent and in the neighbourhood. For instance, on one Guy Fawkes' day soon after his arrival, he rebuked the neighbouring squire very sternly for giving money for tar-barrels, &c., close to the convent, and he never did it again. Another time he met the hunt at one of the gates, and begged them to turn back, for, he said very truly, "the ladies object to being intruded upon." It appears that they had the custom of going through a portion of the grounds, and had never before been opposed. Father Lythgoe was a most efficient adviser of the nuns in the school, and he always took the greatest interest in the children. He was also very much revered by the nuns, and was remarkable for his very great kindness and attention to the sick. He fell into very bad health in 1857, but remained as confessor to the nuns and children until September 6th, 1866, when he was removed to Stonyhurst, where he died on June 5th, 1873.

Father Francis Brownbill came at about the same time as Father Lythgoe. He had charge of the mission, and sang most of the High Masses. He left in 1863. After him followed Father Henry James, a convert, for one year, and in 1864 another convert, Father George Bampton. He was a most zealous man, and did a great deal of good among the poor, but he was in very bad health, and had already had two strokes of paralysis before coming to New Hall. On the Sunday within the octave of All Saints, 1864, he fell while preaching a very instructive sermon on the glory of the Saints. It was evident that he had been visited with a third stroke. He would, however, finish the sermon, which he did sitting, and supported by two men, and the last words of it were: "Do good while you have time." He survived for a few days, and died on November 10th, 1865, aged forty-nine. After his death Father Rigby came, and was soon obliged to supply Father Lythgoe's work as well as his own, during an illness of several months, which laid the latter up in the spring of 1866. On Father Lythgoe's departure, he united the work of the mission with that of the house for some time. He took the greatest interest

in the children's studies, and promoted the introduction of some subjects which had never been undertaken before. He also strongly welcomed the new building, the increase of the number of prizes and many other improvements which were gradually carried out.

The first choir nun to be professed after Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph's election was Sister Mary Josephine Laurenson, a niece of Mother Agatha, and sister to Sister Mary Sales Laurenson the younger. Sister Mary Josephine had been at school at New Hall, and earnestly desired to become a nun. She and her three sisters had been sent over from Baltimore, where their family had settled, for their education. As a voyage to America was then a serious undertaking, Laura entered the Noviceship straight from the school, but she was very young, and finding the life irksome, she went back to her own country, and for some years gave up all thought of becoming a nun, but on some festive occasion she nearly lost her life in a boat accident, and then her conscience reproached her so much for her infidelity to her vocation that she entered a convent without delay in her own country, as she had no hope of being again admitted at New Hall; but when the Bishop examined her for her profession, he ascertained that, though content to remain where she was, it was only because she thought the convent of her first choice was closed against her. He therefore refused to allow her to take her vows until she had applied for re-admission in it, and to her great joy she obtained her request. Her elder sister, Mary Sales Laurenson, was then Mistress of Novices, and it is said that she was exceedingly strict with her sister, who was not young, being thirty years of age when she entered the Noviceship. Both sisters were very talented and very much beloved. They were both very good musicians, and Sister Mary Josephine had a remarkably beautiful voice. Her gratitude for her vocation and her fervour were very great. She soon fell into bad health, but she never spared herself, and was ready for any work whenever she was at all able to do it. She was always trying to help others. She died on May 16th, 1853. Mother Mary Sales Laurenson died on August 24th, 1848. She was one who had not been noted for great steadiness while at school, though she was always studious, as she naturally loved study. She spent several years at home before her vocation was matured. As soon as she entered the Noviceship she threw herself with her whole heart into the study of perfection, and was a very deeply interior soul, and very retiring. But she also showed herself to be singularly able in all the offices to which she was appointed. Thus she made a very good first Mistress, and an excellent Mistress of Novices, but it is for her religious virtues that she is chiefly remembered. One of the elder nuns

said of her that no one could come in contact with her without being aware of the fire of the love of God that was burning within her. She was a great sufferer, especially from very violent headaches. It is said that she also suffered great interior trials. She did not attain a great age, as she was only forty-three when she died. These two sisters were the last of the Laurenson family to join the community.

Two years before the death of Mother Mary Sales, Mother Christina Barry, a very clever Irish nun, passed away. Her death was the first that took place in Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph's time. She is remembered among other things for a great gift for writing verses sparkling with fun. Much regret has been expressed that so little of her writing has been preserved. She wrote the last half of the General History, and there found scope for her admiration of Napoleon, a common enthusiasm among Irish ladies of her time. She was always enlisting the prayers of the community for Mr. Newman. She had become interested in him before she entered the convent, and when in 1832, a member of the Badeley family brought him to see New Hall, she did the honours to the party. She followed the course of the Oxford movement with the keenest interest, and lived to see the greatest conversions of 1845. Her death was sudden, but not unexpected, for she was known to have a heart complaint, and was in the infirmary. For some years she said that she had been in daily expectation of her death. She and Mother Francis Xaveria Rorke were the chief assistants of Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph in translating into English, and printing the Constitutions. These had hitherto been read by the choir nuns in the original French, though MS. translations had been made for public reading and for the use of the lay-sisters, into which, however, some mistakes naturally crept. Father Holden, S.J., then confessor of the community, wrote the Preface.

The first public retreat of eight days was given to the community by Father Cobb, S.J., in 1847. Before that date, the annual retreat was of five days only, part of the community making it for five days before Pentecost, and the others, generally fewer in number, in Whitsun week. The confessor of the house generally gave an instruction each day, but the nuns depended for their meditations chiefly on MSS. which each one copied from the originals of various Fathers S.J.; and it was the same with the triduums. Father Cobb gave a second retreat in 1852, and to the end of his life he was always a great friend to the nuns.

In 1849 Reverend Mother asked for, and obtained, chiefly through the

good offices of this kind friend who was then Provincial, a visit from Father General Roothaan, though his secretary, Father de Villefort, at first answered that it was out of the question. The great bell was rung as the carriage drove up the avenue, and the nuns assembled in the parlour to receive him. In one account of his visit he is described as "a very tall man, fully a head and shoulders over Father Lythgoe. His appearance was most venerable, almost unearthly. He looked like a Jesuit saint come down from Heaven and walking on earth—calm, benevolent, but inexpressibly venerable. He visited the school, and the children read a French address to him. He blessed some water in honour of St. Ignatius after giving an instruction on its use. He said that so great is the malice of the devil, that when he sees he cannot draw a soul into sin, he is satisfied if he can only prevent it from fulfilling its duties, and for this end he sometimes causes violent pains, such as tooth-ache, &c. The holy water is especially useful in such cases. He recommended ten *Gloria Patri* with an invocation of St. Ignatius, saying: 'If this pain or illness comes from God, His holy will be done, but if it be caused by the devil, in the name of St. Ignatius—begone!' It may be as well here to record a favour which was granted some years later by the use of this very water, which was treasured with great care. In 1865, the cattle plague which was raging all round us, attacked our cows, though miraculous medals had been tied round their necks, and a solemn procession was made by the priests, nuns, children with cross and banners and singing litanies all through the farm, but in spite of all this eight cows died and another was attacked. Father Maher, S.J., who happened to be here, said: 'Why do you not apply to St. Ignatius?' Accordingly, some of the holy water blessed by Father General was given to him, with which he sprinkled the cows and cow-house. The sick cow died, but we never lost another, though all around the disorder raged for weeks after."

We owe to Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph's zeal a pious custom very dear to the hearts of many generations of New Hall girls. Very soon after she was made Prioress, she established the May processions, which she always attended herself, singing the prayer after the Litany. The hymn that was by far the most frequently sung, at least from 1851, was "O purest of creatures," in its original form, with its supplications for the definition of the Immaculate Conception. After that glorious definition a much greater variety was introduced. Until 1859 a temporary altar was erected in the pavilion for the month, and this was decorated with the most loving care by the children. In that year the late Sir Stuart Knill, then Mr. Knill, gave the present altar

and reredos to the Children of Mary, on occasion of his eldest daughter coming to school at New Hall, and from that time the children of Mary have always attended to the decorations for the May processions. The stipulation made then that two processions should be made every year, one in the month of May, and one on July 9 for Mary Knill, has been faithfully carried out, and the Litany and the *Ave Maris Stella* are sung as arranged.

A procession of the Blessed Sacrament on Corpus Christi was first attempted in 1849. The absence of sufficient pomp was complained of by the Father then here, and only two of these processions of the Blessed Sacrament were attempted until 1871.

So strongly was Father Francis Brownbill in favour of using all the richest ornaments on these occasions, that in 1849 he insisted on carrying the large monstrance, but it was far too heavy for him, and his wrists were much swollen with the weight of it, and he did not dare to attempt it again.

In the spring of 1855 the house was newly roofed. The tall chimneys were then built, and the attics on both sides of the house were turned into habitable rooms. At about the same time the prettiest room on the school side was spoiled when the ornamental alcove in the yellow room was removed, to make place for a new back staircase. At this time too, the dragon which had been on the palace gates in Henry VIII.'s time, and when the gates were destroyed had been placed on the roof, was taken down and put in its present position in the grounds, and with it fell many stories concerning it which at any rate were believed in by the younger children, one of which was that the echo which is so strong in one part of the grounds was repeated from his mouth, and another that he had a fiery tongue which some professed to have seen. The statue of our Lady was then placed over the church door, and beneath it is the very flattering inscription to Queen Elizabeth, which though paltry when applied to our Lady, still contains some words that may be appropriated to her.¹

Dr. Wiseman had been a kind friend and father to the community while he was Vicar Apostolic of the London District from 1847 to 1850, and the troubles following on the so-called Papal Aggression roused all the filial devotedness of the nuns. When, in 1851, His Eminence announced his intention of calling here on October 21, on his way to open the church at Witham, it was resolved to give him as grand a reception as possible. The

¹ En terra più savia Regina. En Cielo la più lucente Stella.
Vergine Magnanima, Dotta, Divina, Legiadra, Honesta e Bella. (See p. 136.)

great bell was rung as soon as the carriage was seen in the avenue, and the men were assembled at the gate to cheer, while the nuns assembled in the chapel, standing choir ways with lights. The Cardinal robed in the out-quarters, and then entered the chapel, which was handsomely decorated. The choir sang *Ecce Sacerdos magnus* and *Te Deum*. Then he went to the school, where the children were drawn up in a semi-circle to receive him. The first in the school either spoke or read a congratulatory address with the sentiments of which his Eminence expressed great satisfaction, as he said he considered them to be those felt by the Mistress and community. He kindly accepted a large bouquet of artificial flowers made by the children, and so contrived as to open and form two altar bouquets, which he said should be used in his own chapel. Either at this visit or one that he made a few months later, he enchanted the children by asking that they should accompany him down the avenue when he left the convent. He walked with the elder girls, and sent eight or ten of the little ones—screaming with delight—in his carriage, where they had orders to examine everything they could find in the carriage bags. On another occasion, after the Cardinal had visited the convent in spring, and the grounds were covered with sweet violets, the girls threw bunches of them into his carriage as he drove away. Some of them missed their aim, and his Eminence gave great pleasure to the throwers by having his carriage stopped, and the bouquets picked up. Another time he condescended to be present at a representation of *Fabiola* by the girls.

In the summer of 1864 a person presented herself for a lay postulant, and alleged that she had been recommended by a well known London priest long since dead. She was unfortunately so far believed in as to be taken on trial as a maid. There was then a postulant with the same name as herself, so instead of being called Ann, she was called Lucy, which was to be her religious name if ever she was admitted as a postulant. All went well for a short time. She was a good worker and showed herself ready to help in any way. She seemed pious, even what may be called “high flown.” She also had many stories of how she had silenced Protestants by her arguments. But presently all sorts of things began to be missed, and after a time, when it became certain that she was the thief, she received notice to leave on the following day. Meanwhile the part of the house where she lodged was locked up, but fearing lest the following day she should be handed over to the police, she made herself a rope of torn sheets, and let herself down in the night from a high window, having sent down a large bundle before her. At the Chelmsford station the next morning she announced herself as Sister Lucy,

an escaped nun. Her cause was taken up by Protestants of a low class, and a good deal of annoyance was experienced in the convent for a time. In this case it must be owned that Reverend Mother showed herself simple and credulous, for the priest whom she named had only known her when she had been a prisoner, and had never recommended her. She came on her own recommendation alone. She went away dressed in the clothes which the choir novices had put aside for the religious habit and which were kept in the part of the house where she lodged. Many things were missed when she left, but fortunately nothing of great value.

Mother Magdalen Sales Poole is the only nun who died during Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph's superiority of whom any written account has been preserved, but there are some whose names should not be passed over in silence. Mother Bernard Carpue may be said to have been infirmarian all through her long religious life of over fifty years. Shortly before her profession she began to suffer great pain in her legs, but she thought too lightly of it to mention it, and very soon after her profession disease showed itself, which completely incapacitated her from assisting at choir and from other community duties for the rest of her life. She had acquired a good deal of skill in attending the sick, and this talent she improved and turned to good account. She was always either infirmarian or apothecary, with an active second under her. She was able to mix the drugs and to labour in both these occupations so far as was possible in a half-recumbent position. No one knew which to admire most, her skill or her great charity and kindness. Even in her very old age, when confined to the infirmary herself, she always counselled the infirmarian, and her judgment was relied on by all. For many years she had a very able assistant in Miss Thomas, a lady who entered the Noviceship, but failed. She was a very highly-educated person and very devoted to the community, and when Reverend Mother Regis wished to engage her as a sort of infirmarian to the school she accepted the post with alacrity. She had been through some sort of hospital training. Strange as it seems now, she lived in a cell adjoining Mother Bernard's cell and opposite the "shop" or "dispensary," and there they worked together. Miss Thomas visited the school every day, and saw and prescribed for any child who was in the least indisposed. She was also a very good musician and used to play the organ very well. The nuns used to remark that she was an instance of the necessity of a vocation, for in the Noviceship she could not make herself happy, but she was as happy as a queen while doing much the same duties without having the obligation of them upon her. Mother Bernard was also

very talented. Father Lythgoe said of her that she had the head of a man. When young she was noted for her very high spirits, so that her life of confinement must have been a very severe cross to her. She was very methodical even in her devotions, and full of piety. She consoled herself in her life of suffering and privation by her great devotion to the Passion and to the Dolours of our Blessed Lady. Her appearance was very striking. She was so tall that when once as a girl she went to see a giant who was exhibiting himself, and was astonished to see him leaning his elbow on the top of an open door, he said: "Do not be surprised at me, miss, for you are quite as tall for a woman." She is said to have been very handsome. She died on October 9th, 1857.

Mother Constantia Coleman died in 1861 at eighty years of age. She was always known for her great love and zeal for the choir. She was often chantress, and her joys and sorrows were connected with the success or non-success of the choir. She had a very cheerful spirit, and even when quite old and infirm, a visit to her was looked upon by the children as a very great treat, for she was full of fun and knew well how to amuse them. Mother Ann Teresa Grehan was one who without any special talents was always very useful in every office she was placed in. She was first Mistress, Mistress of Novices, and Subprioress.

In the winter of 1868 Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph's health began to fail, and she wished to resign. She waited until after the celebration of her silver jubilee of superiority in January, 1869, and in the April of that year she resigned her office with the permission of the Archbishop of Westminster and the consent of the Chapter. No one had ever doubted that she was an exceptionally holy woman, and in many ways a very able one, but perhaps few were prepared for the great abnegation and humility with which she edified the community during the last ten years of her life. Her health improved so much that she was able to follow all community duties to the end of her long life. Not only had her assiduity in choir always been great, but she had a voice and manner of reciting which was a support to all. She begged to be allowed to serve in the refectory and do all the ordinary manual work, and only obedience prevented her from doing as much as the youngest nuns in the house. As it was, her needle was never idle in the service of the community. Her gift of prayer had always been, as it were, visible to all, and now it was more than ever her very life.

It is difficult to write of so uneventful a life as hers was for these ten years of cheerful humility and obedience, but the edification which she then

gave was very great. Early in February, 1879, she was attacked by a severe cold. A few days before her death she attempted to walk to Mass, but could not get so far as the choir door. She was taken back to the infirmary, where she received the last sacraments with great fervour. For some hours before she died she went on repeating audibly: *Mane nobiscum, Domine, quoniam advesperascit.* She died on February 7th, 1879. She survived her successor by six years. She was eighty-eight years of age, had been seventy-one years in Religion, had been professed sixty-nine and a half years, and had spent seventy-five years of her life at New Hall, during which time she had only been out of the convent once.

The resignation of a Superior is a painful ordeal for a community, but it has one advantage, which is that only one day is spent without a Mother. Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph resigned on April 14th. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed from seven o'clock that morning until after Compline. His Grace, Dr. Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, arrived that evening, accompanied by Father Butler, and the following day, April 15th, the election took place. The choice of the Chapter fell on Mother Mary Alphonsa Corney, who had shown herself a very able Procuratrix, and was actually filling that office at the time of the election. She was forty-four years of age, and had been professed thirteen years. She was a widow, her maiden name being Caroline Dolan. She was at school at the Benedictine Convent at Hammer-smith when she was very young, and was at New Hall from 1837 to 1841. After a few years she was married to Mr. Alexander Corney, who left her a widow after two years of a very happy married life. After a great deal of reflection and prayer she made up her mind to become a nun. She entered on her noviceship in 1853, with great generosity, but her health broke down and she was judged to be too delicate for the life of a nun, and was dismissed. She was away for some months, during which time she made a pilgrimage to St. Winifride's Well, and her health was so much improved that she was allowed a second trial. She showed a most fervent religious spirit. She was clothed on January 23rd, 1855, and professed on January 24th, 1856, by His Eminence, Cardinal Wiseman. She was made Mistress of the third class, and second Procuratrix, and in both these occupations she showed herself very energetic and efficient, and still more so as first Procuratrix. The new building in the school was proposed while she was Procuratrix, and as she had the chief part in carrying it out, it may be as well to give a little account of it here. The alterations were quite as important as the new building itself. The partition wall between the old Green Room

and Yellow Room was thrown down, as well as the old bath-room wall, with the passage and staircase, and one large dormitory was thus made all through the west wing of the house. An exactly similar dormitory was made over it, and both were divided into sixteen little cells, to contain a bed and a washing stand with taps for hot and cold water and a waste-pipe. These were considered to be a very great improvement, as they were a great convenience, but after the outbreak of diphtheria in 1893 they were removed, although the sanitary authorities refused to condemn them, as they were so well trapped, but the opinion of medical men was decidedly against them. The school and the church were also heated with hot water pipes, which have been a great success, as the rooms on the north side of the school had hitherto been very cold. The new building itself consisted of an ambulatory and lavatories, a music room, first Mistress' room, and master's room on the ground floor, a bath room, a small dormitory, and two other small rooms, one of which was fitted up for a Children of Mary's chapel on the first floor, and above it a chapel for the Sodality of the Angels, a linen room, maids' room, &c. The first stone was laid early in 1869, but the whole was not completely finished until the early summer of 1870. At the same time all the drains about the place were made new, and at the time of the outbreak of diphtheria in 1893 they were found to be in perfect condition.

After the opening of the new building, the school, which had dwindled down to about thirty children, began to increase very rapidly, so that for a few years it numbered over sixty, but these were too many, and it was found better to limit the number to about fifty as before. In May, 1871, the laundry was altered, and a passage was built to connect it with the house.

In 1872 part of the former secular chapel was cut off to form a Communion chapel for the nuns. A new refectory was built for the community, and the old refectory was turned into a sacristy and confessional. These changes were completed by the end of the year, but Reverend Mother Alphonsa was seized with her last illness before they could be completed. It is to be feared that she injured her health by her great energy in carrying out her designs. But though her time as Prioress was one of bricks and mortar, the best efforts of her zeal were for the promotion of regular observance and the spiritual advancement of the community. She was one who naturally inspired confidence, for she truly had the heart of a mother, and there is nothing that she would not have done for any of her daughters. She was spared some of the crosses that fall to the lot of most Superiors. Thus, though there were some aged nuns at the time of her election, no death

occurred in the house during the four years that she was Prioress. She fell into a very weak state of health in the early winter of 1872. It seemed as if God intended to grant the innumerable prayers offered for her recovery at the request of the community in different parts of England, Ireland, and France, for she rallied in a surprising way soon after Christmas, and even came a good deal among the nuns, but on one day towards the end of January, after taking a short walk in the bright sunshine on a rather cold day, she was seized with violent pains in her limbs, which proved to be the first symptoms of rheumatic fever. The illness rapidly increased, and to the very great grief of the community she died on February 6th, 1873, aged forty-eight, and having been Prioress for not quite four years.

CHAPTER XI.

MODERN TIMES.

THE election of her successor took place on February 14th, 1873, under the presidency of Canon Gilbert, the Vicar General, as Cardinal Manning was unable to be present. Our present revered Reverend Mother Aloysia Austin Butler, was chosen thirteenth Prioress.

As it is impossible to say anything about her, it may be as well to say a few words about some of the nuns who went to their reward soon after the election. MOTHER MARY JOSEPH HALY died at the age of eighty-three, of pneumonia, on April 1st, 1873. She was professed in 1813, and made her noviceship under Mother Ursula Semmes. She was made Procuratrix in 1818, and filled this office for three terms of five years. She was at different times first Mistress, Mistress of Novices, and Subprioress. In her younger days she was Mistress of the second class, and taught very well. She was very talented and was one of the pillars of the community all through her life. She led a very holy and interior life. Her favourite devotion was the Holy Infancy of our Lord, and perhaps her characteristic virtue may be said to have been holy simplicity. In regularity and love of her Rule she was perfect. During her life she had a great fear of death, but this entirely forsook her when her last short illness attacked her. She made her preparation for the last sacraments with perfect calm, and continued in peaceful prayer to her last moment. The nuns were all gathered round her, and she asked that all should sit down, not kneel. Of one who came in late and knelt, she said, almost with her dying breath—"Make her sit down." All through her life she had been thoughtful for others, hard upon herself. Another of her virtues that ought to be mentioned was her perfect loyalty to her Superiors, and this she showed on her death-bed by expressing the most tender affection to the new Prioress, telling her that God would certainly bless her.

MOTHER STANISLAUS HUBBARD had been for some years in a decline of

a very suffering sort. She died on May 19th, the same year as Mother Mary Joseph, 1873. She had spent the greater part of her religious life as Procuratrix or Portress, and Mistress of Lay-sisters, but she began by being a very efficient mistress of the little class. Here some of the children were so devoted to her that they consulted her and looked upon her as a true friend as long as she lived, but her career in the school was cut short by an affection of the throat, from which she always suffered. Indeed, from when she was quite a young nun her bodily sufferings were unusually great, and as she had a very marked devotion to the Passion, we may suppose that our Lord allowed her to share in His sufferings. She was very much beloved by the lay-sisters, whose immediate Superior she was for many years. She was blunt in manner, but truly kind and considerate, and was never known to take offence at anything. As Portress she was a true friend to the externs connected with the house, and also to the poor.

MOTHER FRANCIS REGIS STOURTON died on November 18th, 1877, and with her death the long connection between her family and this community was ended, but not so the affectionate gratitude with which the family is regarded.

Anna Maria Stourton was a daughter of William, seventeenth Lord Stourton, and Catherine Weld. She came to school with her sister Teresa, afterwards Lady Arundell, on July 3rd, 1822. She was then thirteen years old, and very delicate. She was much given to piety even then. Father Bridge came to New Hall that year, and he fostered her holy dispositions. She also had frequent spiritual conversations with Mother Aloysia Austin Clifford, the then first Mistress. She had always longed to be a nun, and before she left school she made up her mind to enter the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and her desire became more ardent during the short period of one year that she remained at home. She always kept the letters that Father Bridge wrote to her on spiritual subjects during that year. Some anxiety was felt during her novitiate lest her health should fail, and her first probation was prolonged on this account, but her desire was so ardent that she was allowed to be clothed on July 16th, 1829, and she always spoke with a sort of rapture of the joy she felt on her clothing day, for when that step was taken she never doubted of her profession, and, on the other hand, those who witnessed the ceremony thought she looked angelic. Even the old lay-sisters used to say they never saw a novice look so beautiful. After her profession she taught

in the school for a time. She was several times second Mistress, and once first Mistress, from 1849 to 1854, and her great work at this time was the introduction of the Sodality of the Children of Mary. It seems strange that it had never been introduced before, considering that it is such a speciality of the Jesuit Fathers, but in fact it had never been established, and Mother Francis Regis after much prayer, and—she used to say—suffering, with the concurrence of Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph and the advice of Father Lythgoe, obtained an affiliation to the Prima Primaria, and the sodality was established on the feast of the Annunciation, 1851. All the New Hall Children of Mary should remember that they owe a debt of gratitude to Mother Francis Regis. She had a very good school in numbers, and with an excellent spirit all the time she was in office. She was mild by disposition as well as by conviction, yet she always maintained good order. The great care she took of the health, deportment, manners of each individual child, and the shrewdness she showed in detecting and trying to correct faults of character in them, are things that can never be forgotten by those who were under her. So watchful was she that the little ones used to believe she was inspired to know anything they did that was wrong. In 1861 she was made Mistress of Novices, and she has always been remembered with intense gratitude and veneration by those who were novices under her. A few years later her health failed entirely, and she also became nearly blind. When asked how she was she would answer: "As God wills!" She died suddenly in the infirmary on November 18th, 1877, the feast of the Dedication of the Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul. Her former novices remembered, in the midst of their sorrow for her loss, with what pleasure she always used to look forward to the approach of these two Dedication feasts in November, as though she had been accustomed to great spiritual consolation drawn from the beautiful words of the Office, which she also made use of in her instructions to them. The truest way in which her life could be summed up in one sentence would be by saying that she lived for prayer and nothing else. She always had the appearance of a person absorbed in prayer and burning with the love of God. From a child she had always been very fond of spiritual reading, and all through her religious life she gave a great deal of time to it, and had read nearly all the books in the library. She had the uncommon practice of learning many pages of her favourite authors by heart. When she lost her eyesight, though she felt the privation of reading very much, she

used to say cheerfully that she had plenty to live upon. No one could live with her without being aware of the tenderness of her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, or of her ardent love for the Passion, which she honoured with many daily devotions. Her love of and gratitude for her own special vocation was not only marked, but even singular.

The next to die was one of her former novices, SISTER MARY PHILIP BURKE, on August 14th, 1878. In saying a few words of her it seems natural to begin with her devotion to our Blessed Lady, which amounted to a passion in her and was altogether singular. She was one to whom we might apply the words: "Is it possible for a man to conceal fire in his bosom so that his garments should not burn," for she was always talking with burning affection of her Heavenly Mother, so that those who knew her best could hardly assert that they had ever conversed with her for five minutes without hearing glowing expressions of love and confidence from her lips. . . . But she had very many other devotions. She was attracted to a multiplicity of practices, and many might wonder how she was able to get them in, and how her mind could have stood the strain, but the secret probably was that she adopted them little by little, and always with method. If she was asked, for instance, what devotions she used each day in honour of the Passion, she would tell so many as to excite astonishment. The number of her renewals of vows, spiritual Communions, offerings of the Precious Blood that she made each day must have amounted to many thousands. Her acts of love were wonderful, but it is impossible to enlarge upon them. She had a childlike way of expressing herself on spiritual subjects that was very attractive. She was very fond of what she called "doing dust," by which she meant asking our Lady to offer to God as many acts of love as there are atoms of dust on earth, drops of water, &c., &c. No one would dare to say how often in the day she "did dust," but the number was regulated, like her other practices, some of which she did thirty-three times in the day, or part of the day, some sixty-three times in honour of our Lady's life, some eighty-one, in honour of the years of St. Philip's life, but most of them were done in multiples of seven, and they were all regulated to fit in with her duties, so that she had her stated practices, it may be said, for almost every step she took, and for her minutest actions. If she saw the rain, she would say at recreation—"Look at all those drops; don't they make you happy?"—or some similar thing, "but after all there is nothing like dust, for everything goes to dust in the end."

Her humility, her spirit of self-sacrifice, and her perfect conquest of self-will were truly remarkable, so were her charity and the perfection of her observance of the rules. Her love for her vocation used to break out in burning words: "Really," she would say, "it would be impossible for our Lord to do more for us than He has done." During the first years of her religious life she had a great fear of death, but for the last two or three years this was exchanged for an ardent longing to go to God, and she would often talk with delight of the bright day of eternity. She was very much beloved by the children, who revered her as a saint. She taught needlework to the first and second class to within two months of her death, when bad symptoms began to show themselves. While in the infirmary she exerted herself in preparing work, &c. On the 24th of July, fever set in with delirium, which, however, only lasted for a day or two. She received the last Sacraments, and no one thought she could live to the end of the month, but she lingered on till the morning of the eve of the Assumption, when she died at about 4 a.m., having just completed her thirty-sixth year. Father James Brownbill paid her a visit of consolation. On coming away he told one of the nuns that he did not believe St. John Berchmans could have spoken differently.

MOTHER MARY ANGELA MITCHELL died on December 18th, 1878. Her name is so dear to several generations of New Hall girls, that a paragraph must be devoted to her. Few girls have had such a long school career as she had, for she was sent to New Hall in 1818 with her sister Josephine when she was six years old, and her sister only three and a-half, and she left in September, 1830, having completed twelve years in the house. In 1824, a third sister joined, named Matilda. She left with her sisters, and later on in life became a Religious of the Good Shepherd. She was sent to found a house of her Order in Havana, of which she was the first Superior, and was afterwards made Provincial of the Province of New Orleans. In 1891, on her way to the Mother House at Angers, she came to New Hall to renew her acquaintance with the home of her childhood, though her surviving friends were then few.

All the three sisters were very talented. Their father, Mr. Colin Mitchell, was a West Indian merchant, Scotch, and a Protestant; their mother was a French Catholic. They were born in Havana, and there they lived for some years after they left school, but the greatest part of Mother Angela's life, after leaving New Hall, was spent in

the United States, and she always considered herself to be American. She had always wished to become a nun, but the death of her father at sea, and other circumstances, obliged her to remain for many years with her mother. The vessel in which he was to sail for Cuba started in a storm, and was never heard of again. Mrs. Mitchell and her daughters were awaiting him in Cuba, and when at length it became certain that the vessel was lost, they settled first in Baltimore, and then in New Orleans. Mother Angela could seldom speak of this time of anguish. It was not until 1852, when she was in her fortieth year, that she was able to carry out her long cherished desire of becoming a nun. The parting from her family was a very severe trial, as she could not expect to see any of them again. Perhaps it was as a reward for her sacrifice that she was enabled to do some very good work during her voyage of six weeks, for several of the passengers were converted by conversing with her. She was clothed on June 21st, 1853. Cardinal Wiseman consented himself to receive the vows of herself and two companions, and she was surprised and consoled when she found that he had appointed July 29th for the Profession day, for that was the day which she had always supposed to be the anniversary of her father's death. She was made Mistress of the first class before her profession, in 1854, when Mother Mary Aloysia was made first Mistress. She brought to her work a great deal of energy and resource, so that when the first regrets at parting from the former Mistress were over, the girls congratulated themselves on having her, and some used to think that coming into contact with her mind was like getting into a new world, for she really gave her own mind to her pupils. She also inspired a great love for study. In 1868 she became too deaf to teach a large class, but she was made Inspectress of Studies, and taught a small superior class. She also continued to teach the plays, and she was beginning the preparations for her twenty-fifth Kingstide, when a sudden attack of pleurisy brought her to death's door. She received the last Sacraments on November 13th, after which she rallied, but remained for about six weeks in imminent danger of death from heart failure. On the night of December 18th, the expected attack came on. She said to the Infirmarian, "Is this death? Then I must accept it." She joined her hands and bowed her head, as though surrendering herself into the hands of God, and thus died. She was remarkable, amongst her other virtues, for her simple obedience. On one occasion, during her busiest time, she went to the then Reverend Mother's room, but at the same moment the latter was called elsewhere; she said to Mother Angela, "Just wait till I come back." She was next summoned to the parlour, and forgot Mother Angela, who stood

outside her room for more than two hours. It was during one afternoon in Lent. She was not in the least put out, and expressed surprise that any one should have thought it possible that she could go away.

SISTER PAUL COUPE died on May 5th, 1882, at the age of ninety-four, the greatest ever attained in our annals. Hers was a life of hard work, for to the very end she did a great deal of needlework, and of lighter kitchen work, peeling potatoes, &c. Her memory never failed her, and she had many stories both of her early life and of the first years of her religious life. On one Friday, when as a young girl she was acting as cook and housekeeper in Yorkshire to a priest who was a cousin of hers, a neighbouring priest came to visit her master. This sorely vexed poor Jane Coupe, for her master did not abstain. She herself dined on potatoes, and there was no fish in the house, and no means of getting it. Sister Paul used to tell how she said a Hail Mary, and took a stick and a string, and went to the pond in which nothing had yet been caught but eels, but on that day she at once caught a very fine trout. When she first came to Religion, the lay-sisters used to go out at five each morning to milk the cows. Sister Paul at that time did some dairy work. On one occasion she came in very much tired. She was asked by one of the lay-sisters to help her in her work. She answered, "I can't, I should drop." The Sister complained, and Reverend Mother Regis called Sister Paul to account for refusing to do this act of charity. She said, "I couldn't do it, Reverend Mother, I should have dropped," and Reverend Mother gave her a rebuke, beginning, "My dear, how could you have dropped better?" She was very much devoted to Reverend Mother Regis, who used to delight her by speaking to her in the Lancashire dialect, but she told this story to show that in spite of her kindness she could speak sternly sometimes. Sister Paul certainly never spared herself. She not only worked indefatigably, but was hard upon herself in every way. Until her extreme old age, certainly long after she was seventy, she made her daily spiritual reading on her knees. Her spirit of recollection and prayer was visible to all. She went from one duty to another without wasting a moment. Perhaps the virtue in which she seemed most to excel was holy poverty. She was always a model of neatness, but she used to darn and patch until she was, as it were, clothed in patchwork. It was probably the same spirit that induced her to labour so indefatigably to the very end of her life. At one time she was cook, and for many years she was in the laundry, where she did very hard work until she was seventy-seven years of age. She was all kindness and consideration for those who worked with her. She found means of promoting devotion to our Lady and St. Joseph among

the externs with whom she came in contact, and by whom she was much beloved. She was sister to Brother John Coupe, a Jesuit lay-brother.

Of other choir nuns and lay-sisters who have died within the last twenty-five years, it would not be difficult to write paragraphs, but they would be very similar to one another. MOTHER MARY CATHERINE KENDAL, MOTHER MARY MAGDALEN LOUGHNAN, MOTHER ANN JOSEPH GILLOW, and MOTHER TERESA STANISLAUS BUTLER, might be instanced as models of religious fervour. Mother Mary Catherine was noted for the perfection with which she did all her actions. The intensity of devotion, for example, that she put into her signs of the Cross is well remembered. Mother Mary Magdalen was distinguished for her burning zeal, not only for her own religious perfection, and that of her novices when she was Mistress, but also for the glory of God and the conversion of sinners all over the world. Her conversation was much on these matters, and indeed she had a great gift for holy conversation of all kinds. Mother Ann Joseph was one who truly loved our Lord in the simplicity of her heart. She had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and very frequently when not able to go to the chapel she would say to another whom she knew to be on her way there, "Give our dear Lord my love," or say, "O Lord, remember her—or that poor creature." In her old age, when her hearing became impaired, her aspirations of love to "Sweet Jesus" used to be very audible in the refectory, and at all times of silence. She was devoted to the souls in Purgatory, and used to pour out loving colloquies to our Lord and our Lady in the cemetery in their behalf. These prayers were sometimes overheard. Mother Teresa Stanislaus' life was one of very hard and hidden labour. She was a truly interior soul, full of the spirit of prayer and of mortification.

MOTHER ALOYSIA FRANCIS and MOTHER ALOYSIA JOSEPH PEREIRA were known for their perfect exactness in regular observance.

SISTER CLEOPHOE spent nearly all her life in the service of the sick, with a devotedness and skill that won the admiration of all. She was a model of an infirmiry sister. She thought she could never do enough to help the sick, though always herself a great sufferer.

On March 20th, 1893, passed away one of the best known and most beloved of the community. MOTHER MARY ALOYSIA, ELEONORA WELD, was the eldest daughter of Mr. Humphrey Weld, of Chideock, and of Christina Clifford, who claimed to be the first child at New Hall, and the second at Dean House. Though Mr. Weld, following the traditions of his family, wished to send his girls to Taunton, Mrs. Weld begged that her eldest girl should be educated at

her own convent. Eleonora accordingly came to New Hall on April 19th, 1822. She was then a very tall, high-spirited girl, and soon became the life of the school, especially of the games. Even in her old age it was amusing to see her great interest in a game of burnt ball, which in her childhood, as in her old age, was the favourite game in the school. She was also one of the best actresses. She had imbibed the tenderest piety from her saintly mother, and this went on increasing to the end of her life. She left New Hall in May, 1830, and was then sent for a year to the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Paris. Before leaving New Hall, she confided to Father Bridge her desire to return as a novice, but as she had outgrown her strength her mother kept her at home for two years. She entered in 1833, was clothed on our Lady's Nativity, 1834, and professed on the feast of the Presentation, 1835. She had made her first Communion on the same feast twelve years before, and each year as the day came round, it was easy to see that it was a day of joy to her. Immediately after her Profession, she was sent to teach the second class, and in 1845 was made Mistress of the first class. She taught very well, and soon her bright, genial, largely sympathetic character made her a great favourite with the children, to many of whom she was a lifelong friend and adviser. Some of them have especially noticed the large interests with which she inspired them. In 1854 she was made first Mistress, and though she succeeded one who was so able, and so justly revered as Mother Francis Regis, she immediately showed herself most efficient. In 1866 she was made Mistress of Novices, again succeeding Mother Francis Regis, and in 1874 she was elected Subprioress. Later on she was made Mistress of Lay-sisters, an office that was very congenial to her. In all her offices she showed that she had the heart of a true mother. Her piety was of the tenderest kind. As each feast came round she was steeped in the spirit of it to a remarkable degree, and she was able to impart a share of this deep devotion to the children when she was first Mistress so well, that it has been a great help to very many, perhaps to all, for the rest of their lives. Her grief and mourning in Holy Week were very visible, and at Easter she seemed not able to contain her joy. In her old age she had charge of our Lady's chapel. The arrangement of it was an act of the purest piety with her. Thus, she liked to have the flowers full blown, that they might not last too long, and that she might have the merit of renewing them often, for she thought the trouble was her little sacrifice for our Lady. On Fridays, and especially on the Passion feasts in Lent, she would expose models of the instruments of the Passion, and on Good Friday she would change the emblems, pictures, &c., nearly every hour.

During those last years she made a third meditation each day, whenever she possibly could. She was always much given to prayer, and she did not seem to suffer much from dryness. Once, when a Father, during an exhortation, had offered many motives for consolation in spiritual dryness, someone asked her whether she thought nuns suffered very much in this way. She answered, "Certainly not. Priests have their learning, but what could nuns do without spiritual consolation. Of course God tries them from time to time."

During those last years, her spirit of sympathy showed itself as much as ever. She showed the liveliest interest and pleasure in the successes of the younger nuns in the school and elsewhere. In fact, to few could the words be so well applied, that she "wept with those that weep, and rejoiced with those that rejoice." It would be difficult to exaggerate her love for her vocation, and for her own Order. She firmly believed the tradition of its Apostolic foundation, and though she could not trace the links that united her community with that of the Holy Women who ministered to our Lord, she did not doubt that they existed. Her joy was great when Father Wynne, S.J., told her that when he was in Jerusalem, he had been permitted to sleep in the room of the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre in which St. Helen had slept, because his family claimed descent from St. Helen, and the same room, before and after St. Helen's time, had been the Reverend Mother's room. She believed that some day the community, or some members of it, would go to Jerusalem. Her love for St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, and especially St. Aloysius was very great. The last few years of her life were spent in a sort of solitude occasioned by her deafness, which prevented her from hearing sermons or general conversations. She read a great deal, and always retained a great facility in relating stories or any interesting matter. She was always contented with her deafness, and was so persuaded that it entered into the designs of God for her sanctification, that she could not be persuaded to use the water of Lourdes for her cure. She was never idle for a moment. During the Lent of 1893 she was seized with an attack of erysipelas. While she was recovering from this she was seized with an apoplectic fit. She lay on her bed for a week without eating or drinking, and without giving a sign of intelligence, except that from time to time she made the sign of the Cross, and she said, "Thank you," when any service was done for her. She died on March 20th, which that year fell on the Monday in Passion week.

Father James Brownbill had been Extraordinary to the community for many years, ending in 1863. He continued to visit the convent from time to time, and was generally present at the Kingstide plays until

1873, when he retired to New Hall, where the presence of so holy a man was considered to be a privilege. He had received many great converts into the Church, among others, Cardinal Manning and Mr. Hope Scott. At last he became too infirm to offer the Holy Sacrifice, but this privation only lasted for a few months. He died on January 14th, 1880, at eighty years of age, and was the ninth and last Jesuit Father to be buried in our little cemetery. Seven months earlier Father James Bateman had been laid to rest there. He came in 1877 and relieved Father Rigby of the charge of the school. Like his predecessor he was much interested in the children's studies, and also in their plays and little exhibitions. He was in very feeble health, and died after a short illness, on June 17th, 1879. On the day of his funeral Father Clough arrived, and for a time supplied as confessor, and he continued to say his daily Mass until 1885, although the infirmities of old age had begun to show themselves. Father Rigby left in the July of the same year, and in September Father Oxton came, but he was removed to Bournemouth in June, 1881. Father di Pietro succeeded him, but he was in very bad health, and he died at Manresa on December 15th, 1883.

In February, 1884, Father William Johnson came as director, to the great satisfaction of the nuns, who had experienced something of his enlightened spiritual teaching during a retreat which he gave to the community in 1876. He was seventy years of age, but still very vigorous, and full of zeal both for the community and the school, where he was much appreciated by the elder girls, and he was of great use to the nuns by his advice. No one doubted that he was extraordinarily holy. His sermons too were very much liked. All this helped to make the blow that fell in his time harder to bear. This blow was nothing less than the removal of the Jesuits, after the long dependence of the community on their wisdom and experience. Though it was probably only after the suppression of the Society in 1773 that they began to live in the out-~~quarters~~ quarters of the convent, still it must be remembered that Mother Susan Hawley and our first Mothers had established themselves at Liège for the purpose of securing the direction of the Fathers, and one was appointed to whom the nuns might have recourse for spiritual advice and consolation. We have a proof of this in one of the first visitation decrees already quoted. There is a tradition, that for some unknown cause there was a break in this state of things for some years before Reverend Mother Christina Dennett entered the Noviceship, but then the experience of the

nuns was not happy. From the time of Reverend Mother Christina Dennett there had been no break in the privilege which the nuns enjoyed of having Jesuit directors. In 1866 there was a rumour of the withdrawal of the Fathers, but through the kindness of Dr. Manning, the Archbishop of Westminster (not then Cardinal), the change was postponed for six months, and thus time was obtained for an appeal to Rome, which was decided in favour of the nuns. On the 19th of December, 1884, a letter from the then Provincial abruptly announced that the time had come for the Fathers to be withdrawn. The consternation and dismay caused by this letter need not be dwelt upon. Cardinal Manning was again appealed to, and again granted a delay of six months, but this time the appeals to Rome were unsuccessful. Father Beckx had then retired, and Father Anderledy refused to reconsider his determination. Father Clough was removed on September 3rd, 1885. It was arranged that Father Johnson should remain with his successors until Monday, the 7th, but on Saturday, the 5th, early in the morning, he walked away to the Chelmsford station for fear lest the sound of carriage wheels should give notice of his departure. He went on the mission at Bournemouth, where he died on February 6th, 1892. Like all their predecessors, these two Fathers are remembered with deep gratitude and veneration.

If we pay this tribute to the care bestowed upon our community through so many generations by the Jesuit Fathers, it must not be thought that we are unmindful of the kindness experienced from those who succeeded to their place. On the departure of Father William Johnson, Father Batt was appointed to be chaplain and confessor, but only remained three years and a half, when he was succeeded by Father Edward Heery. Father Heery is still with us, and being one of the living must not be made the subject of a biographical notice. But we may be permitted in terminating this short account of our spiritual directors to acknowledge the care and devotedness with which he has worked for the community and the children, who will always regard him as a true friend.

Nothing worth recording seems to have occurred until 1893, when immediately after the holidays scarlatina appeared among the children. There were four cases in all. They were apparently recovering very satisfactorily, when diphtheria broke out, and the school was dismissed within twenty-four hours for the first time since 1814. To the grief and anguish of the nuns, and especially of those in charge of the school, three deaths occurred. The outbreak was attributed to the extraordinary heat

and drought of that summer, which may have affected the sewers into which the dormitory waste-pipes ultimately emptied themselves. The drains themselves were found to be in perfect order. Nevertheless, the whole system of drainage was made entirely new. As many as sixty workmen were employed, and the whole work was completed in three months. On this occasion the late Mr. Charles Butler came to the assistance of the community with very handsome donations towards the expenses thus incurred, and Lady Arundell, a former pupil of New Hall, also gave material help at this time. The school broke up on October 13th, and re-opened on January 29th.

In 1798 the Liège community had purchased New Hall at the very close of the year, but as the summer is so far more agreeable for festivities than the winter, Reverend Mother decided to celebrate the centenary of the house before the holidays, on July the 3rd, 4th, and 5th. His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan graciously consented to be present, but was not able to come until Tuesday, 5th. On Sunday, July 3rd, the festivities began by a High Mass of thanksgiving for all the graces obtained during the century. The children sang a Mass composed expressly for the occasion by Father Downes, of Bradford. Father Nicholson, S.J., from Stamford Hill, preached a very eloquent sermon, which ended with a very glad surprise. This was the blessing of the Right Rev. Father General of the Jesuits, Father Martin, which had been obtained for us by the kindness of Father John Gerard, the present Provincial of the English Province, who added his own blessing and congratulations in the kindest terms. This double blessing was most warmly appreciated by the nuns.

On Monday, the 4th, there was a Solemn Requiem Mass with three priests, for all the dead who lie buried in our cemetery, and for all deceased benefactors. Father Gallwey, S.J., Father Sydney Smith, S.J., and Father Oxtou, S.J., arrived in the course of the afternoon.

On Tuesday, 5th, which was the great day, the High Mass was for living benefactors. Father Gallwey preached a most appropriate sermon, at the end of which he claimed a very old connection with New Hall, as his mother, his sisters, and other members of his family were educated here. The Cardinal arrived at about 5 p.m. The Fathers were at the door to receive him, the nuns in the parlour, and the girls, old and new, were gathered in two groups in front of the house. In the evening the children represented some tableaux of Henry VIII., Mary Tudor, and other historical personages, who once resided at New Hall, after which the

guests begged and obtained a prolongation of the festivities until Wednesday evening, when they left, and New Hall resumed its usual quiet routine. With this date, 1898, the present chronicle must end, and it is to be hoped that future events will be carefully noted, so that when the next century comes there may not be so much difficulty in writing its history.

It would, however, be a great defect to close this very imperfect sketch of our sojourn at New Hall without at least recording our appreciation of the devoted service of many members of the Phillipson family. There are other names that might be mentioned, as those of Wilkinson, Henry Lacy, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Perry, but the Phillipsons have been with us for the whole century without a break, and not only without giving the community any uneasiness, but on the contrary, earning our best thanks and acknowledgment for their most loyal and intelligent zeal for our interests in all circumstances, prosperous as well as adverse.

CHAPTER XII.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE SCHOOL.

THE school was dismissed at Holme Hall, but was resumed at Dean House, where Henrietta Charlotte Goldie,¹ the first "pensioner," arrived on the 18th of June, 1797. She spent exactly a year at Dean House, and later on in life she wrote a detailed account of her school days under the title of *Days of Yore*. Through the kindness of Father Goldie, S.J., we now possess a copy of this MS., which is interesting for the comparison it enables us to make between our past and our present customs. The order of the day was almost the same then as it is now. The feasts and recreations were also the same, but at Holy Innocents the little Reverend Mother was dressed as the nuns then were, *i.e.*, with a black silk hood and a white handkerchief. The girls went in procession to "court" as they do now, to ask for the privileges. Kingstide was also the same—a French play the first night, and English plays on the two following. Miss Goldie gives the outline of the two last, which, she says, were composed by Mother Felicitas Corcoran, a very clever nun, who died at Liége. Supper was followed by nunnight, with its cakes and negus and cards, then as now the only time in the year when these last were allowed. On the feast of St. Aloysius, there was High Mass, and sung Compline, and "many good things for dinner, among which were green peas and strawberries for the first time." She does not mention St. Aloysius' tart. Nunnight was a word in common use. Miss Goldie must have learned it from the nuns, as she had no companion at school until August 22nd. Her nunnights were spent with the whole

¹ She was born in Edinburgh in 1781. On the death of her father, George Sharpe Goldie, her mother determined to become a Catholic. As the penal laws were then in force, she took this step in France. She was received into the Church, with her little son and daughter, at Rouen, in 1789. In 1791, Mrs. Goldie returned to Edinburgh, but as the legal guardians of the children insisted that they should be brought up Protestants, she escaped with them to Rouen, in 1792. The Revolution was then nearly at its height, and the mother, with her two children, were imprisoned in the Convent of the Poor Clares, at Gravelines. They did not recover their liberty till December 15, 1794. In 1795, they went to Winchester, and boarded in the house of the Rev. John Milner, afterwards Vicar Apostolic. Henrietta first joined the school kept by the Franciscan nuns at Colebrook House, who are now at Taunton. She was sent to Dean at the date mentioned in the text.

community, at recreation from seven to eight, and the same privilege fell to the lot of all who were at school at Dean House with her. The girls used to dance after supper on winter evenings, though not quadrilles as now, but the minuet and country dances, and Sister Mary Sales Laurenson, then a novice, danced before Miss Goldie had other companions. This seems strange to us now, but very similar is her description of "Saturday duties," which she mentions under that very name. Her first companions were Anna Maria and Christina Clifford, who claimed the privilege of being the first girls at New Hall, for they came here with the nuns, and either arrived at the house first, or dated from their entrance at Dean, for Miss Goldie did not come to New Hall. Anna Maria was nine years old. She died at New Hall in 1805. Christina, who was only eight when she came, remained nearly nine years under the care of the nuns, not leaving New Hall till May, 1806. She married Mr. Humphrey Weld, of Chideock. Margaret Smith, from Woodhall, Northumberland, a niece of Mother Mary Joseph and Mother Berchmans, was the next to arrive, and then, in the following order of succession, came Catherine Nihill, a cousin of Mother Francis Xaveria Trant; Mary and Anne Wright, nieces of Mother Aloysia Joseph; Miss Tuite from Sante Croix, and shortly after, three Irish girls, Lucy O'Toole and her cousins Letitia and Margaret Whyte, the two latter introducing a name which has been on our register for several generations; Isabella Macdonell, from Edinburgh, a niece of Sister Joseph Sales Chichester, returned to the care of her former Mistresses on January 14th, 1798. She had not only been at school at Liège, but had travelled to England with the nuns, but when the school was broken up she was sent to the Bar Convent at York. In all twenty girls entered at Dean, of whom nineteen accompanied the community to New Hall. Those whose names have not yet been mentioned were Charlotte Stourton, Charlotte Connelly, Melior Weston, Miss¹ Addis, Miss Coppinger, Miss Bourke, Miss Grehan, Miss Power. Of each of these twenty girls it is noted in the school register that she has had the small-pox. The same is stated on the entrance-register of nearly all the girls for many years later. In after-years at New Hall, these girls always spoke of their days at Dean House as the "Golden Age," an appellation which Miss Goldie's MS. fully explains. The school was small, which meant much chartered liberty, and perhaps spoiling for its scanty population. At New Hall, however, the school increased rapidly, twenty-eight new girls came in 1799, and twenty-six in 1800. If some of the stories told of the early days

¹ Our registers frequently leave out the Christian name.

of New Hall be true, the girls did not lead a dull life, even after the Golden Age was ended. One of these stories is that Christina Clifford once climbed to the top of the house, and seated herself on the dragon, to the terror of the nuns.

Once, when Reverend Mother Regis was first Mistress, the girls were preparing for confession in the old "Preparation room," which in those early days served also as one of the priests' ordinary apartments, Father Clifton had left his high riding boots in the corner. Mother Regis was called away for a few minutes, and when she came back she found her niece strutting about the room in these boots, and all the girls in an uproar. Mother Regis scolded the delinquent so effectually that she went crying into the confessional, and told Father Clifton the cause of her tears. He sent for Mother Regis, and rebuked her, saying, "*I will not have her contristated, Ma'am.*" When Mother Regis told the story afterwards, she said, "Well, another time I will let her ride to confession on a donkey if she likes."

As to the studies, Miss Goldie tells us that at Dean House, Latin and German were out of fashion, but we know that both were taught at Liège, though they are not mentioned in the prospectus. Early in this century Latin was again taught at New Hall, for Reverend Mother Teresa Joseph learned it, and she also taught it, but it gradually died out until some time in the seventies, when it was again taken up, but it did not become a regular class lesson until 1887. There were three general examinations in the year, and two little examinations between each. There were no general holidays, so that examinations were held without reference to them. In or about 1823, Father Scott, S.J., when stationed in London, took a great interest in the studies, and not only regulated them, but on one occasion examined the whole school himself. One of the survivors of this period remembers with some amusement that the children, far from being alarmed at the prospect of such an ordeal, took the greatest pleasure in saying out all that they knew. As to the rewards given, they were very few indeed. Certain silver double crosses were the only ones that we know for certain to have been given at Liège, though others may have been awarded. At New Hall none were given until about the date mentioned above, when silver medals were introduced for success in studies. They were attached to a blue ribbon, and worn on Sundays and feasts. These were very difficult to get, and if kept through three successive examinations, they became the property of the winner. For many years creature comforts were added to the honours of these medallists, a very good "medal dinner" being provided for them,

as well as for the gainers of good conduct cards. The date of this feast was usually kept secret, and great was the excitement when the winners were called out of class to partake of chicken, plum pudding, and other good things, and to enjoy a half-holiday for the rest of the day. This custom, however, was discontinued in 1855. By degrees, prizes of books were introduced, but were in very small numbers at first, and have increased as time went on. At about the same date, places were first arranged according to success in studies. Until then each child ranked according to the time of her arrival at school, except that the classes held precedence of one another. After some years the examinations were limited to two in the year, and this made the fate of the medal holders more precarious, for the time of trial thus lasted for a year and a-half. The examinations were held in October and April, and the last were the most important, as the prizes were given then. The distribution was preceded by a curious little exhibition, which was probably peculiar to New Hall. It was known by the name of "Conversations," the chief item in the programme being two conversations, one in English and one in French. They were composed by the nuns, generally expressly for the occasion, and were on some literary, historical, or scientific subject, as the poets of a given period or country, the middle ages, the wonders of chemistry, &c. Each conversation lasted for about a quarter of an hour, and was learned by heart and recited, with suitable gestures, by three speakers, who were seated very near the audience. The ordeal was considered to be much more trying than any examination or play. There was also music, a few songs, and a dance, generally a quadrille. This last was disliked more than anything else, and certainly the time of day, about ten o'clock in the morning—was most unsuitable for dancing.

Perhaps some of the present generation of New Hall girls may be interested in the uniform worn by their predecessors. From time immemorial till shortly after 1850, the week-day uniform was pink print in summer, but on Sundays and feasts white was worn, with a blue sash or belt. In winter it was bright red merino, the dress being made low, and a tippet lined with silk completing the costume. In about 1852, blue was adopted for the Sunday, and in 1870 the same colour came into use for all seasons of the year. As to the black silk hoods still worn for Confession and Communion, and on a few other occasions, in all probability they were used at Liège, and were not peculiar to the Convent. The nuns used them in choir when they adopted a secular dress. Perhaps if the truth were known, similar hoods were worn in other convents at the same date, but here they have never been abandoned.

They have generally been very much liked by the children, some of whom have been known to keep theirs for years after they left school, but they have never been defended on the score of prettiness.

Apart from the studies and the uniform, probably very little change has taken place in the school for very many generations. The great recreation days were the same in Miss Goldie's time at Dean House as now, in fact the only festive custom mentioned by her that is not in fashion still, is the "compliment" paid to the Reverend Mother on New Year's Eve, which consisted of two speeches, one in English and one in French. This custom has gone out of memory, but very many still living remember the "compliment" made to the first Mistress on the eve of her feast, when the youngest in the school, dressed in white, presented her with a huge bouquet, while the "first" read the address, the other girls being arranged in two semi-circles behind them.

Holy Innocents is probably kept in much the same way in most convents, though the opening ceremony known as "Court" may be peculiar to New Hall. The children walk in procession to the work-room, and two-by-two make a curtsy to Reverend Mother, and then walk backwards to their places. The youngest in the school, dressed in full choir habit with the cloak, and accompanied by the next youngest representing the Subprioress, enters last of all, and makes a little speech to the real Reverend Mother, to beg for the privileges of the Holy Innocents, after which the formality is over, and chatting begins.

Kingtide has always been known under the same name, and has been kept with the same festivities at least since the enlargement of the school in Reverend Mother Christina Dennett's time. It begins after Compline, on the Sunday within the octave of the Epiphany, or if the Epiphany falls on a Sunday, on the feast itself, from which time until 9 p.m. on the Wednesday evening all the rules of the school are considered to be in abeyance, except that of silence in the dormitories at night. In the place of rules however, what may be called a code of "old customs" comes in. The new children are taught by the old ones what these are and how far they may go with impunity in the reign of misrule. Eating sweets in the classes and playing cards are two of the privileges. But the plays are in reality not only the chief excitement, but to many the great occupation of the three days, for there are always last touches to be put to the costumes and the stage requisites. They are indeed the great occupation during the whole of the Christmas holidays. From time immemorial these have consisted of two weeks only, from Christmas eve until New Year's day, when



THE DRAGON.

there is study for three-quarters of an hour in preparation for the following day. From January 2nd to Kingstide Sunday, a period varying for length from five or six days to nearly a fortnight, studies are taken up, but in a way that has for the last thirty years or so obtained for this time the name of Grey Week. Generally the first part of the morning is given to class, and certain class duties are done during the rest of the day, but considerable time is also given to private practice for the plays, also to the music and singing for Kingstide, and the second week is Kingstide week itself. As to the plays themselves we know that at Liège a great many were composed by Mother Felicitas. The "*Masque of Alfred*, by Thomson," for which he wrote "*Rule Britannia*" we know was acted twice at Liège in 1785 and 88. It has been acted once or twice at New Hall from the manuscript copy used then. At New Hall it would be difficult, though perhaps not impossible, to make out the list of plays acted. The "*Great play*," acted on the third night, has been sometimes, though not always, one from Shakespeare, and many former pupils have expressed their sense of the literary benefit they derived therefrom.

Outsiders would consider it absurd to name the "*violet season*" as one of the institutions at New Hall, but all old pupils will recognize it, though there is no need to describe it for them. The abundance of scented violets, white and blue, all over the grounds in spring is generally very great, but the pleasure which the children manage to get from them is far more remarkable.

As to the spirit of the school, a venerable old lady of seventy writes: "I think what struck me most in the school was the way we were trusted, and a feeling of honour among the children not to let another be blamed, but to take the blame to themselves where it was due. Also their great affection for the nuns and for their school which has always been so remarkable." She also mentions the facility which the children had in expressing themselves in writing, and attributes it to the "*Letters from Memory*,"—and the many "*compositions*" required of them. A pupil of much later date, a lady well known in Dublin, gives the same verdict as to the spirit of the school in her day, but as might be expected from a native of the sister island, she gives some humorous instances. Thus she reminds us of the consolation given by an old Chelmsford flyman to a child who was weeping over her first arrival at school: "Ah, miss, they cries when they goes there, but they cries twice as hard when they leaves." She writes on another topic: "We were very well

fed. I often look back with wonder to the amount we got through. I have before my eye wedges of tart and mince-pie, and wonder I survive to tell the tale." The old dragon figures also in her recollections. "Many a ride," she writes, "I have had on his back!" but in her time he was standing on a not too lofty pedestal on the ground, and not on the top of the house. The children themselves rarely speak of one another as girls, but as fishes. It is not easy to trace the use of the word indefinitely, but only a few months ago another Irish lady of seventy years of age, unhappily since dead, bore witness that the word was in common use in 1840. It has been suggested that in Belgium children are sometimes called *petit poisson* as a sort of pet name, but the flaw in this derivation is that the nuns have never used it. No other suggestion is forthcoming.

And now it is time to turn to the story of a substantial proof, given by the "old fishes" to the truth of their attachment to their old convent.

In the course of the year 1897 New Hall girls of many generations expressed the wish that all should unite in making an offering in commemoration of Reverend Mother's silver jubilee as Prioress, and of the centenary of the establishment of the convent at New Hall, which were both to fall due in 1898. The gift proposed was nothing less than a new Lady altar for the church, handsome enough to be in keeping with the beautiful high altar given by Count Potocki in 1880, on occasion of the profession of his sister-in-law. As the church was to be redecorated that year, it was proposed to anticipate the date of the offering. The work of collecting the subscriptions of old pupils was undertaken by Miss Macdonald, of Invernevis. The alacrity of the response astonished not the community only, but all who knew the circumstances. Not the least of the joyful surprises which the nuns received on the occasion of this jubilee presentation was the warm letter accompanying the subscription of Sister Mary of St. Philip, Superior of the Mount Pleasant Training College of Notre Dame, a former pupil of New Hall for over two years.

The beautiful stone altar was completed early in October. A new statue of our Lady was not part of the design, as the community were too much attached to their former small, but most devotional white marble statue to be willing to exchange it. This statue (it may be here mentioned) was given by Laura Jerningham, afterwards Mrs. Edward Petre, who was for a short time at school at New Hall, and before her marriage is

believed to have wished to enter the Noviceship, but who actually joined the Order of Notre Dame, of which she was one of the most eminent members. It was executed at Rome from a design given, we understand, by Mr. Charles Weld, at the request of his sister, Mother M. Aloysia, who suggested the attitude that our Lady should have.

But the presentation of this altar was accompanied by a very sad and distressing cross. It has been said that Miss Macdonald was the chief collector of subscriptions. She exerted herself very much and very intelligently. When the altar was put up it was thought well that she should be present at the first Mass offered upon it, and she also wished to discuss business connected with it. She was therefore invited for a few days. She was in very high spirits at the success of her efforts and asked that the first Mass should be said for the community and the second for herself. She was known to have a serious malady, though she seemed rather better than usual, but on the very day that the Mass was to be said for herself she died suddenly. Of the grief and distress of Reverend Mother and the community and of her family, who were devoted to her, there is no need to speak. It was a strange circumstance that she should have asked for the Mass to be offered for herself that day. It was unlike her. It would have been more like her to ask for it for the donors of the altar, and she gave one of her friends to understand that she had a special reason for what she asked. With her New Hall lost a most devoted friend. She was at school here for about four years, and left in April, 1880, full of affectionate loyalty and even enthusiasm for her convent, and these sentiments never left her, but rather increased as years went on, and it would be impossible even to enumerate her kind deeds. To her friends her personality was very charming. She was talented in many ways, and her mental endowments showed themselves naturally in her most entertaining and pleasing conversation. Her zeal for God's glory and her efforts to promote it in every way she could, her very great devotion to our Blessed Lady and her charity to her neighbour were, so to speak, manifest to all. With her name we close this short chapter about the school.

Since the above lines were written, it has become necessary to chronicle yet another gift connected with the centenary. Miss Catherine Butler, the only surviving sister of our present Reverend Mother, has presented to the community a new great clock, which, among its other accomplishments, is to ring the Angelus. His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster gave Confirmation at New Hall on June 23rd, 1899, and on the same day the new Angelus bell arrived, and His Eminence graciously consented to bless it. The bell was placed outside the church door, and was adorned with garlands of flowers. It received the name of Mary Catherine, in honour of the donor. The clock is at present in course of erection, and the old "fishes" will be glad to learn that the old bells are to be retained for the ordinary striking.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

DE CONGREGATIONE CANONICORUM DOMINICI SEPULCHRI JEROSOLYMITANA.

I. Hæc Congregatio circa annum Domini 1100 in Ecclesia Dominici Sepulchri Jerosolymitana, quæ erat Patriarchalis sub piissimo Principe Godefrido fuit instituta sive, potius et verius, restituta; nam ipsa Patriarchalis Jerosolymitana ab illius prima institutione fuit regularis, ut supra hoc eodem libro, cap. 41, ostensum est. Cum autem Christiani, Duce Godefrido, civitatem Jerosolymam de manibus Saracenorum eruisent, ipse Godefridus Canonicos regulares, quos de partibus Occidentalibus secum adduxerat, cum religiosiis monachis in ecclesia Dominici Sepulchri et templi Domini, et aliis supra memoratis auctoritate Apostolica sibi facta collocavit, ut testantur D Antoninus in 2 parte Hist. tit. 16, cap. 13, § 8, in fine, et Jacobus de Vitriaco supra allegatus; ex quibus Ecclesiis ipsa Patriarchalis non tantum fuit præcipuum et peculiare canonici Ordinis collegium, verum etiam caput præcipuæ Congregationis complurium ecclesiarum et collegiorum ejusdem Ordinis, quæ ecclesiæ sive collegia non solum in partibus Orientalibus, verum etiam in Europa, videlicet in Italia, Sicilia, in Galliis, et in Hispaniis olim erant constitutæ, ex quibus, quæ vel ex literis Apostolicis, vel ex Jacobo de Vitriaco et aliis probatis autoribus expiscari licuit, hic subjiciuntur.

1. Prima igitur Ecclesia et caput totius Congregationis, a quo tota Congregatio nomenclationem obtinebat, erat ipsa Patriarchalis Dominici Sepulchri, cujus Prior cum cæteris Canonicis Patriarcham eligebant, qui erat eis loco Abbatis.

2. S. Petri in civitate Joppe, quæ civitas non habebat Episcopum, sed ecclesia major, quæ S. Petri dicebatur, per Canonicos Dominici Sepulchri regebatur; ex Jacobo de Vitriaco in *Historia Orientali*, cap. 58, et ex literis Cœlestini Papæ II. ad Petrum, Priorem Dominici Sepulchri, quas statim reddemus.

3. Ecclesia Dominici Sepulchri in civitate Aconensi, quam cum multis prædiis et domibus eisdem Canonici donaverat nobilis vir Lambertus Hals.
4. Ecclesia S. Mariæ de Numaz in territorio civitatis Aconensis.
5. Ecclesia S. Mariæ in civitate Tyro, cum pertinentiis suis.
6. Ecclesia S. Sepulchri in Monte peregrino, cum pertinentiis suis.
7. Ecclesia S. Georgii in montanis Judeæ, cum pertinentiis suis.
8. Ecclesia S. Sepulchri in civitate Brundusio, in Italia.
9. Ecclesia S. Sepulchri in Barleto, quod est oppidum in Apulia satis nobile.
10. Ecclesia in civitate Venusina, quam dono dederat Nicolaus Episcopus.
11. S. Sepulchri juxta Troiam, civitatem in Apulia.
12. S. Theodori Martyris, prope civitatem Beneventanam.
13. Ecclesia in pago Trenderf¹ diocesis Constantiensis, cujus et omnium supradictarum in dictis literis Cælestini II. mentio habetur.
14. Ecclesia S. Crucis, prope civitatem Messanam.
15. S. Andreæ in civitate Platea nuncupata, in regno Siciliæ, de quibus vide quæ notavimus supra.²
16. S. Sepulchri de Calatao, sive de Calatambio in civitate Tirasonensi, provinciæ Cesaraugustanæ.
17. S. Crucis Limpurgensis, in confinibus quatuor ditionum transmosanarum.
18. Herensaliensis vulgo Chanay in diœcesi Leodiensi.
19. Ruremundensis in Geldria, prope dictam civitatem.
20. Udemensis in Clivia.

II. Quæ supradictæ omnes ecclesiæ vocabantur Prioratus, excepta decima sexta, quæ nunc titulo Abbatiali est insignita, et aliquæ illarum erant sine dubio collegiatae et conventuales, licet de omnibus id mihi non constet. Præstat vero ad veritatem prædictorum confirmandam et præteritorum memoriam conservandam, ipsas Cælestini Papæ II. literas subjicere, quarum hoc est exemplum acceptum ex Authentico, quod in ecclesia Archiepiscopali Ravennatensi servatur.

Here follows the text of a Bull of Celestine II., which is too long for insertion, but may be found in M. Willimsen's work, p. 106.

¹ Denkendorf.

² He refers to a previous account of the origin of this house, in 1106.

III. Cæterum Jerosolyma iterum ab infidelibus capta, et Patriarcha cum Canonicis aut interfectis aut loco exactis, tota Congregatio funditus est eversa, præter unicum monasterium Abbatiale S. Sepulchri de Calatambio, quod nunc etiam floret, et duo vel tria ex postremo loco narratis. Ecclesiæ dictæ Congregationis, in Italia et ulteriori Sicilia constitutæ, partim sunt commendatæ, partim Militibus hospitalariis S. Joannis Jerosolymitani, vulgo Melitensibus unitæ: quas antea Milites S. Sepulchri Jerosolymitani, qui Patriarchæ subiciebantur, obtinebant, verum et illi et Canonici nunc fere extincti.

Plura de hac Congregatione Sylvester Maurolicus libro sæpe allegato, contendens aliam fuisse a Lateranensi, quod illius Canonici non albis tunicis, uti Lateranenses, sed nigris sub rochetto uterentur, super quo pallium nigrum crucibus rubeis, insignia Regni Jerosolymitani referentibus, signatum gestarent. Verum levia hæc sunt; nec ipsi Lateranenses, quod viderim, dixerunt Congregationem Dominici Sepulchri eandem fuisse cum illorum Congregatione, sed ambas ejusdem Ordinis Canonicorum regularium S. Augustini, sola accidentaria differentia non autem essentiali distinctas, ut capite statim sequenti ex instituto ostendemus.

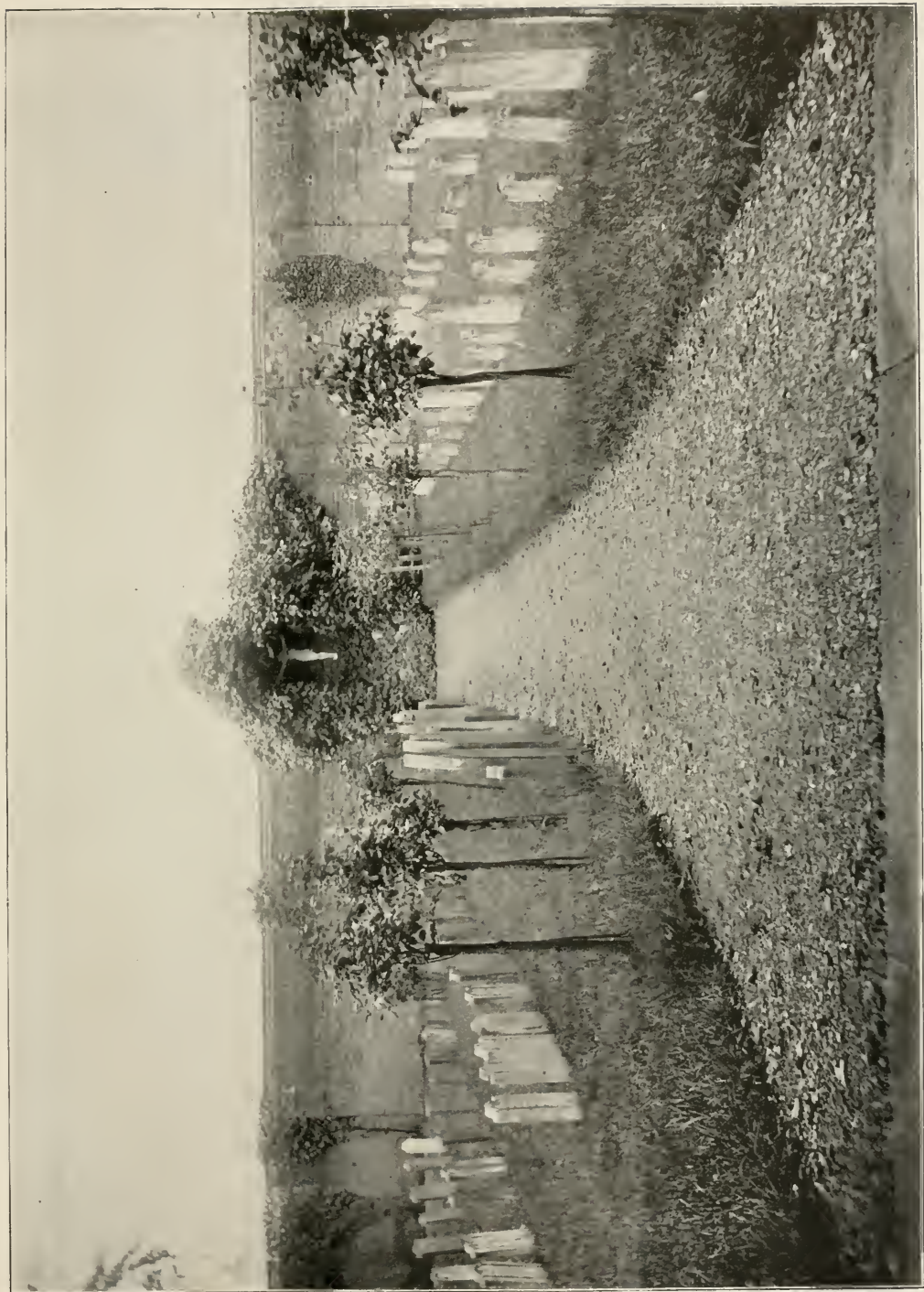
APPENDIX B.

Maximilianus Henricus Dei et Ap̃licae Sedis gratia Archiepiscopus Coloniensis, Sacri Romani Imperii Princeps Elector per Ital̃ Archicancellarius, et dictae Sedis Legatus natus, Episcopus ac Princeps Leodiensis et Hildesiensis, Administrator Berchtesgadensis, Comes Palatinus Rheni, utriusque Bavariae, Westphaliae, Angariae et Bullonii, Dux Marchio Franchimontensis, Comes Lossesis et Hornensis. . . . Venerabili, Nobili, sincere nobis dilecto Ferdinando a Bocholtz Cathedralis nostrae Leodiensis Decano, etc. Salutem in Domino. Exposuit nobis qua par est ratione Moderna Religiosarum Anglarum sub titulo Sti. Sepulchri in Monte Petroso Civitatis nostrae Leodensis Superiorissa, ad id officii provisionaliter constituta, quemadmodum divina favente bonitate duodecim modo, inter triginta Religiosas, Capitulares existant, numero sufficienti ad Electionem stabilis alicuius Priorissae ineundam Constitutionibus instituti sui, et prescripto Sacri Concilii Tridentini conformem, ideoque enixe rogavit ut ex iure Nobis competente dignaremur personam aliquam deputare, nostro electioni isti nomine prefuturam ; Hinc tibi de cuius prudentia et zelo singularem habemus fiduciam, harum tenore vices in id muneris nostras committendas duximus, hortantes ut pro ea notitia quam de Conventus statu ex anteriori visitationis Commissione assecutus es, dictam Electionem rite et canonice faciendam ita dirigere satagas, quemadmodum e maiori Dei gloria et Religiosarum bono futurum sperari possit. Datum in oppido nostro Bonnæ quinta Octobris, Anno Domini millesimo sexcentessimo quinquagesimo secundo.

MAXIMILIANUS HENRICUS, Ep.

Lo. Sig.

Pasc : Foullon.



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